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SPIRIT
OF
CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL.

(Chambers)

NCE .

SPIRIT

OF

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL:

ORIGINAL TALES, ESSAYS, AND SKETCHES,

SELECTED FROM THAT WORK.

BY

WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

SECOND VOLUME.

EDINBURGH:

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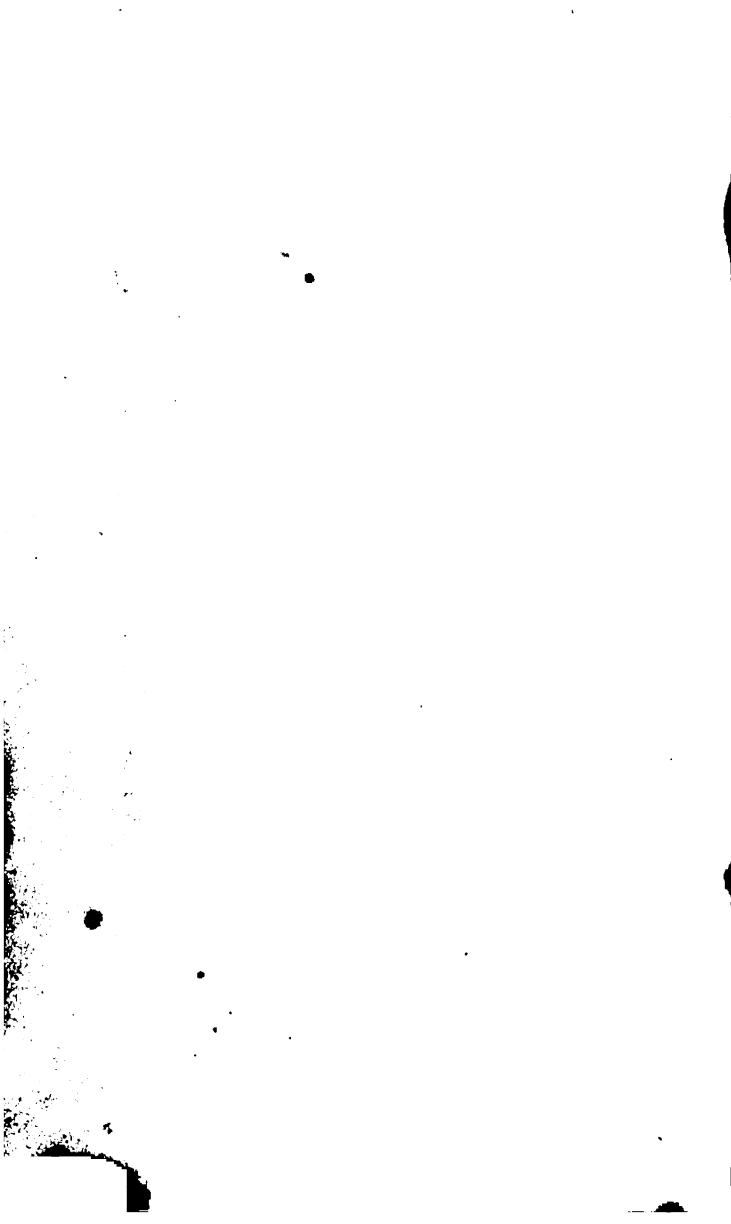
NOTICE.

THE first volume of **THE SPIRIT OF CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL** WAS prefaced by the following paragraph :—

“ BY the recommendation of a number of their friends and agents, **MESSRS CHAMBERS** have been induced to reprint a selection of the principal original articles of their **JOURNAL** ; in order that such individuals as might desire to possess those articles in a portable shape, distinct from the mass of compilations and extracts with which they were accompanied in the numbers, might be gratified in their wish ; and in order that this new series of **Essays**, in which an attempt has been made, almost for the first time, to delineate the maxims and manners of the middle ranks of society, might have an opportunity, in the shape of a book, of attracting the attention of those by whom it might be overlooked in its original form and progressive mode of publication.”

To this it is only necessary to add, that the reception of the first volume has been such as to induce the authors to publish a second, the materials of which are chiefly selected from numbers of the **JOURNAL**, ranging between the forty-seventh and ninety-fifth.

EDINBURGH, *May* 13, 1835.



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SPIRIT

OF

CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL.

MONSIEUR MOLLIN.

ATTACHMENTS to persons and places are among the most familiar sentiments of the human heart; yet there are some very mistaken notions respecting them. The general idea is, that they are, or ought to be, as enduring as the heart itself; that no one who has ever cherished either friendship for man or love for woman, should change, or *can* change; and that, let our circumstances or our situation on the globe be altered as they may, we must never forget the people who formerly were around us, or the spot we once called our home. Thus, when we part from a friend, whom we are almost certain never to see again, we take as many vows of fidelity, and exchange as many promises of a close epistolary correspondence, as if our mutual welfare in future depended upon a continued attachment, or as if any thing else would be a kind of treason against one of the most sacred of human sentiments. We depart for the new scene and the new society, with desponding hearts, as if we believed it impossible ever again to form such attachments as those we are just breaking. It may be whispered to us that there is much pleasure in novelty, and that we may perhaps soon forget our old friends for the sake of the new, and lose the recollection of former scenes in the charm of the present. But we repel these insinuations with a kind of indignation, and resolve,

I may almost say, to preserve a mournful retrospection of the past.

Now, the truth is, we are not designed to live upon the recollection of either past faces or past scenes. Friendship and love are not to be supported for any length of time without personal intercourse ; nor can any scene ever be so important to us in recollection as that in which we are immediately placed. Instead of affection being a tangible object, which we can pledge away for ever, as the heart is supposed to be in nonsensical poetry, it is a *power* residing inalienably within us, to be exerted on whatever successive objects we are pleased with, the new objects regularly attracting a certain quantity of affection away from the old, till in the end the old have little or none remaining. Some readers will exclaim against this doctrine as a most unnatural one ; but in order to convince ourselves that it is really correct, let us recollect the fate of any one of all the friendships and loves we ever cherished. Suppose, for instance, the case in which friendships are supposed to be most warm—a school intimacy. Who that ever entertained even the most enthusiastic attachment of this kind, and, on parting, vowed to write regularly every month, if not oftener, ever found that the correspondence was in the least degree interesting after the first year ? A few fond letters *are* exchanged, breathing the very spirit of old friendship. But soon this becomes tiresome. One of the parties happens to delay answering a letter of the other, till he is almost ashamed to do it ; the reply to this is more dilatory still ; and at last the correspondence, from which so much was expected, ceases altogether. It is much the same with tenderer intimacies. Love, to be lasting, must be frequently fed with a sight of the loved object. At a distance, other objects are presented, and the affair is at length only maintained at the expense of a struggle of principle—in which case it is of course no longer love. Nor is it wrong that our affections should be thus transferable. If we could never love but one woman in the course of

our lives, or experience a friendship but for one local set of friends. we would be miserable creatures indeed. The chances would in that case be ten to one against our obtaining a partner in the least agreeable to us : we would probably enjoy both friendship and love only for one brief space in youth, while happening to be at a particular place, far from our eventual residence. All the rest of life—every other part of the world—would to us be a waste. Now, as the case really stands, though the scenes, and the friends, and the mistresses of youth, are perhaps the most permanently endeared, and though it is certainly proper that we should not cast off old attachments with an appearance of indifference or inconstancy, so as to give pain to those we are parting from, we can, nevertheless, find more or less pleasure in all the scenes which fortune has provided for our residence—all the various sets of people among whom we are thrown, from the beginning even to the close of life—and each successive woman upon whom our *power* of affection has chanced to be exerted.

About the end of the last war, a considerable number of the French officers who had been taken prisoners and sent to the depots in Scotland, were liberated upon their word of honour, and permitted to reside in the neighbouring towns, upon a certain small allowance made to them by our government. Amidst a host of dashing fellows who resided on this footing at the ancient burgh of Cairnton, in the south of Scotland, there were a few old personages who had been captured in the earlier years of the war, and almost grown grey in this species of honourable imprisonment. Some of these latter personages were so different in age and habits from the others—were so entirely, as it were, of a different generation or fashion of Frenchmen (for every thing about this nation changes in ten years)—that they hardly seemed to belong to the same country. While the gay young officers of the emperor went frolicking about in long surtouts and moustaches, turning the heads of all the girls, and running into as much debt as

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sonair," he would say, "if I ver once more in mine own countrie, and had so much money as I once had, your nephew, Mademoiselle Geddes, should not stop till he ver one ministair, putting his head into one pulpit; but I am only one poor prisonair, with six shillings in de week from your king—and what can I do with that?" The good old man was determined, nevertheless, that the youth should not forget his learning, or sink into the tastes and habits proper to his new condition. So, every evening after Thomas had returned from his work, he caused him to bring forth his books, and heard him execute a translation in Virgil or Livy before going to rest. Sometimes this was varied by other intellectual exercises, such as the reading of a novel from the circulating library. *Cœlebs in Search of a Wife*, or *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, or the *Farmer of Inglewood Forest*, or any other crack book of the year 1812, was borrowed at the cheap and easy price of eighteenpence a quarter, and read by Thomas to his aunt and her lodger, who usually became so much absorbed in the interest of the tale, that they heeded far less the progress of the war then going on in Russia, important as it was to the interests of both French and English, than they did the proceedings of the fictitious hero among a set of characters as shadowy as himself. Thus, while an ordinary person would have been apt to answer the common question of "what news?" by mentioning that Bonaparte had overthrown the Russian army at the Borodino, poor Lizzie Geddes would have been apt to state that Robert Bruce had just made his escape from the English court, with his horse's shoes put on backwards; her mind, in fact, running upon the last chapter she had heard read of the Scottish Chiefs.

For several years this little family lived in humble peace and general affection, with hardly an incident to ruffle the habitual calm. Monsieur Mollin daily exhibited his thin shanks, in white cotton stockings, on the beaten foot-path in the green, and every evening enjoyed mental plea-

tures beside his landlady's fire. Sunday after Sunday, he was to be seen gallanting Miss Geddes to church; himself rigged out in a clean shirt, exhibiting a profusion of frill, and a large New Testament under his left arm; while she, on her part, tried to look as well as possible in a well-saved cardinal, first put on about forty years ago; Thomas bringing up the rear, in his leather cap and corduroys, with almost as much linen folded over his shoulders and back as what could be supposed to be in contact with his skin. Few persons in Cairnton lived a more blameless life, or were more generally respected.

At length the tranquil contentment of this scene was broken up by the peace of 1814, which afforded to Monsieur Mollin, for the first time since his capture, an opportunity of returning to his native country. Had it been the old man's fate to live on and on a prisoner till death, he would have been perfectly happy in his bonds, for time had so completely reconciled him to the present scene and manner of his existence, that he never formed a wish respecting any other. When it came to pass, however, that a residence in Cairnton was no longer a matter of necessity, when a possibility of returning to France actually arose, that which, in ordinary circumstances, ought to have been hailed as a blessing, became to him a bitterness and a misery. "Mademoiselle," said he, "I must leave you—I must go back *au ma patrie*: your king will give me no longer any money to live upon, and I must see what I can do in mine own countrie. It is *tres grand malheur*—one great distress; I do not expect that I vil find any one in France to love ~~as~~ much as you and your nephew. But vat can I do?—how shall I pay my lodging?—how shall I live?" The case was too clear to admit of argument; and Monsieur Mollin, therefore, packed up his baggage in an old satchel that had once held Thomas's books, and prepared to take his leave. In the first place, however, he made *two* walks each day for a week, to gather fir-tops, of which he was thus able to store up as many as promised to

serve for a week after his departure. He then spent as much money as he possibly could spare, in purchasing a stock of sugar and tea for Miss Geddes ; as likewise a few drugs, which she occasionally required for a particular malady to which she was subject. On the day when he and his fellow-prisoners were appointed to march, it happened that Miss Geddes was confined to bed with this indisposition—a circumstance that added greatly to his distress. “ Ah, pauvre Mademoiselle,” said he, as with his own hand he mixed and brought forward her medicine, “ *je suis bien fache* at your *maladie*—that is, I am not vat you call *fashed*, but I am sorry—I am *penetre* with grief, that I should have to leave you on your bed of indisposition. Come now—*prenez votre* medicine, and make yourself better. Here is de cup ; and I vil leave it on de little table, and you must take von other teaspoonful in two hours more, and de good fille, Peggy Dickson, down stairs, she say she vil come soon and see if you vant any thing. I have myself taken de dirty vater away, and swept in de hearthstone, and now let me put in de clothes at your back, and make you comfortable. One kiss, Mademoiselle—now adieu—God bless you for ever—adieu !” And they separated, with tears more bitter, perhaps, than any ever shed by youthful lovers when parting to meet no more.

About two months after the departure of Monsieur Mollin, his friends at Cairnton received a letter from him, informing them that he had got back to his native city of Bourdeaux, where he had the satisfaction to find that he had recently been left heir to a small property, which promised to maintain him in comfort during the remainder of his life. He was distressed, however, to learn that hardly any of his relations were alive. The only one in whom he felt the least interested was a young girl, who had for some years been an orphan—the daughter of a niece who had once been his favourite, and a person, as he described her, of the most agreeable properties—quite fitted, he said, to become, in a few years, the wife of his young friend

Thomas, provided they had an opportunity of seeing each other. He complained, however, of the change that had taken place in his absence, the effect of which was to render his native country far less kindred to him than even Scotland; and "it is not impossible," he added, "that I may come back to Cairnton, and spend the remainder of my days with you."

This was destined to be the actual consummation of his story. About six months after having left his humble lodging at Cairnton, Monsieur Mollin re-appeared on the street, with a sprightly young Frenchwoman leaning on his arm. Quite disappointed with his native country and its new regime, he had made up his mind to return to the quiet little Scottish burgh, where he had spent so many happy years, and where dwelt almost the only two individuals of his race in whom he felt the slightest interest. The joy of the Goddesses, as may be supposed, was boundless, more especially as Monsieur Mollin took an early opportunity of declaring his intention to complete the education of his friend Thomas, and push him forward in the profession he originally contemplated. In a few days the whole of the little party was established in a neat house in the suburbs, where it soon became apparent, to the delight of the benevolent Frenchman, that his niece and Thomas were exceedingly taken up about each other. In the process of time, the young man obtained a manse, and Eloise as his companion in its occupancy; and the latter days of Mollin and Miss Goddes have been spent in serenity and happiness.

TURNERS.

"TURNERS" are a class of people, so called because they regularly take what they call a turn every Sunday afternoon before dinner. They are a middle-aged order of men, married and unmarried; and you may always know them at a distance, even when they mingle in the crowds of the emptying churches, by their faces rendered rosy with the country air, their shoes somewhat dusty or muddy, and the breasts of their coats blown back over their shoulders, as if they were anxious to receive as much of the air as possible. The turner is confined all the week by some sedentary employment, to which he sits down every day regularly at ten o'clock—having first opened, with a neat and adroit jerk, the lowest button of his waistcoat—and from which he does not rise till four, after which he takes a constitutional walk till five. The arrear of exercise and air which has been gathering during the week, he pays off by one good "turn" on the Sunday afternoon, having first heard the forenoon sermon—or perhaps not—in some respectable church, such as St Giles's, which always presents ample scope and verge enough for a great number of what may be called skirmishing church-goers. Say he has been indulging a little on the Saturday night; perhaps a brother turner drops in upon him next forenoon, exactly out of time for sermon, and finds him, as the bells are just ringing in, beginning to reach his arms out of bed, and calling for breakfast. In one hour after that date, the two are seen dropping out at the bottom of the King's Park, on the way to Portobello. We say no more. They return about four, and falling into the ranks of the church-going people, may be singled out, secure as they think themselves, by the features we have described. But we must look back to the turners and the turner system of thirty years since.

Suppose the High Street of Edinburgh, on a Sunday

forenoon about that period—a fine summer Sunday—the sun throwing a deep black shade on the south side of the street, and brilliantly illuminating the north side; the bells of St Giles's just beginning to stagger to a cessation; Dr Blair past in his gown; only a few decent citizens, with their wives and children, remaining unchurched; these evidently about to disappear off the street altogether. A small group of middle-aged respectable Lawnmarketees, who have hitherto been standing at the Cross, as if intending to go into church themselves, begin to observe that the streets are getting so empty as to make *their* appearance a little conspicuous. When the bell ceases entirely, they start a little, as if taken by surprise, and muttering something about being too late, psalms begun, and so forth, pull out their watches to see if they are exact with the town clock, cast a few affectedly careless glances around them, and then begin to sidle away in different directions, some apparently towards the Tron, others towards St Giles's. They never reach those places, however. They are absorbed in closes and stairs upon the way. In about half an hour, if you were stationed about the Meadow Walk or Bruntsfield Links, you would see the same figures come oozing out at different exits from the town, and meet at the Golf-House, or at the Cage, or other place of rendezvous, and then proceed, in full band, in the direction of Currie or the Hunters' Tryste. About one o'clock, Mr J— L— might be seen cooling it through Straiton, in the midst of a slow procession of bellied men, his hat and wig perhaps borne aloft on the end of his stick, and a myriad of flies buzzing and humming in the shape of a pennon, from behind his shining pow. Perhaps Captain B—, of the town-guard, is of the set; he has a brother a farmer about Woodhouselee, and they intend to call there, and be treated to a check of lamb, or something of that kind, with a glass of spirits and water, "for really the day is very warm." The talk is of Sir Ralph Abercromby and General Bruce, and the Duke of York and

the Texel ; or, more interesting subject still, the last week's proceedings of the Edinburgh volunteers in the Links. These fat men, who not only sleep o' nights, but almost o' days too, are all serjeants and corporals in the regiment, though, of course, they employ real veteran serjeants to run about planting the little flags to march by, and other matters of duty ; it being as much as they can do to go through the regular business of the drill.

" 'Pon my honour," says one, " it was too bad of Justice-Clerk Hope to keep us so long upon the ground on Thursday. Two mortal hours. I thought I should have fainted with the fatigue and the heat together. I declare, when we all rushed afterwards into the Golf-House to get a draught of porter, I think I drank a whole bottle before ever I felt the taste of it. It was all spent upon the mere aridity of the soil."

" It was a terrible drill, indeed," remarks another. " I heard Lieutenant Beveridge himself say, that he never knew one so fatiguing ; Captain Jardine was quite at a loss to know what his lordship meant. That hopping body ———, who was my rear-rank man, tramped down the heel of my shoe at the beginning of the drill, and I had to march all the time in that state ; I thought I should have died of the pain of it."

" But what do you think Lord Cathcart said of us," asks another, " after our last review ? Why, he said that with five hundred such troops he would not be afraid to meet the charge of three thousand Frenchmen." *

The turners do not countenance newfangled flashy houses of entertainment, which spring up by the wayside every now and then, and after a year or two sink again into another state of existence. They are attached to old,

* This was said by different officers of every militia regiment raised during the French war. It was a pickled phrase for review-days, and, we need not remark, had little reference to the real merit of any particular corps of which it was said.

small, permanent, thatched alehouses, kept by decent *widow-women*, whose husbands perished many years ago by the shooting of quarries, or other accidents, and who were then set up in a way of doing by subscription. With the sneaks of the doors of such houses they are as familiar as with their own firesides. They enter the humble quiet abode, and in an easy friendly way step into the family apartment, where they find the widow compounding between God and Mammon (being unable to leave the house for church), by sitting in front of an extinct fire, with a large Bible open upon her knees, which she reads with one of the eyes of her spirit, while the other is cast backward and *benward*, in reflection upon a reckoning there in progress.

"Well, Mrs Simpson, how are you the day? Very warm weather. When did you hear from your son William? And how is John getting on now?"

"Oh, sir," answers the widow, "William's still with the army in Holland; but I heard frae him lately, and, thank heaven, he keeps his health. John has been in the Hielands for mair than a year, and he's now gardener to Mr M'Scandlish of Dronascandlish—some gait about Badenoch, I think they ca' it."

"And is your dochter Jean still in her place with Mr Smith, in Edinburgh?"

"Ou ay, sir; and she has got an addition of ten shillings a-year to her wages."

After some chat of this kind, the result of a sincere interest which the Messrs Turners take in the affairs of the widow *once a-week*, some undertoned communications pass amongst them—whispers, and mutterings, and unsyllabled sounds—concerning neither they nor any other body knows what, but which at last take shape and language—"Ay, a little *spirits and water*;" their minds, be it remarked, having been all alike made up upon the subject, without communication, for the last two miles of the road, though nobody likes to pronounce the exact words till a certain

trace of the general wish is mutually perceived through the hum of discussion. "Ay," at last says one aloud, after the sounds have been advancing gradually to speech for a quarter of a minute, "a little spirits and water." The widow parades the desired liquor, which is no sooner set upon the table than they commence with renewed vehemence to wipe their dewy foreheads, and remark upon the heat of the day, although they had ceased to do so almost immediately after entering the house. As there is only a single tumbler, one who assumes the office of high priest of the stoup, presents a little of the fluid to his neighbour, who says, however, with a disinterested air and hurried tone, "Be doing yoursel', Mr —, be doing yoursel'—I'm in nae hurry"—though in secret he is all the time absolutely burning to be at it; and then, taking up the water, he says, "Tell me when to stop," and so pours the proper modicum of that less generous fluid upon the spirits already in the glass, "Hech, that's refreshing!" is the exclamation of each, as he sets down the empty rummer. "We've had a long walk. I dinna ken the time when I was so thirsty before." "Good whisky that," says one; "Clemie's Wells, I suppose." "A wee thocht of a goo,"* says another, "but *good whisky*." "I thought," says a third, tasting a little of it raw, with a very knowing air, and a peculiar compression of the lips, and shutting of the eyes, "I thought it had a kind o' *took*.† Where d'ye get this, mistress?" "Ou, I deal wi' Mr G——, i' the Bow-fit. We juist get aye the twa gallons asither twa's dune. He's an *extrornar decent man*, Mr G——." They then enter into extensive conversation with the widow about the improvements of the country-side, and the late deaths and marriages among the inhabitants. "That's a fine new gate Mortonha' is building." Or, "that's an excellent crop of beare behind the house, Mrs Simpson," Or, "Mrs H. of

* Gout—Fr. taste.

† This word, we suspect, is beyond even Dr Jamieson.

C. has had a son lately, I hear." Or whatever else. The object is to keep up an apparently interested talk, or what Haggart would have styled gammon, for the landlady, till they are fully gratified with liquor. Afterwards they stroll back to town in a cool light way, with their sticks at the advance, and their lapels drifting far over their shoulders in the wind.

Sometimes turners are very much annoyed by the weather. At setting out, they are by no means critical about the sky. They hope for good weather so fondly, that they will hardly permit themselves to suppose that it can be any thing but fair. If either the sky, however, is overcast, or a few straggling drops from some passing cloud are felt upon the cheeks, then it is curious to observe how they coax, as it were, the powers of the air, and extract, like true philosophers, good out of evil. "A little dull, I think: clouds high, though." "Draw to heat, I think." "Likely clear up about twelve o'clock." "Only a few drops: good to lay the dust." "Too much wind to be much rain." "A little rain do much good: help to lay the wind." Sometimes it is "the rain to lay the wind," sometimes "the wind to lay the rain," but there is always some consolation—always some shelter, at least from the dread of a deluge. If the rain come seriously on when they are perhaps one mile out of town, "Oh, never mind; soon be at Mrs Thomson's." Sometimes, however, a traitor to the cause of turning remarks, as he contemplates the soaking of his clothes, "It would have been better, perhaps, if we had been all at church;" a sentiment that falls upon the poor company like ten additional bucketfuls. Another, however, chancing to look up, says, cheerfully, "Clearing in the west!—we'll have a fine day yet;" when again all is joy; and Mrs Thomson's door is passed, that not being "*the house*." "A mere skiff, after all: nothing to speak of. The folk at Pennycuik are getting it, though."

There is a certain class of turners who have a particular *penchant* for Leith Pier, as the object and goal of a

walk. "A turn to the end of Leith Pier" used to be a nice neat thing, just sufficient to give a keener relish for the jigot of mutton done to a turn at home, and to be partaken of at five. They used to drop down Leith Walk or the Easter Road, at the rate of two knots and a half in the hour; and when they had reached the end of the pier, they would stand listlessly for a quarter of an hour, gazing over the parapet, and casting their minds, as it were, abroad upon the waters. This has long been a favourite walk, we suspect, among the turners; for in the acts passed in the reign of King William against Sabbath-breaking, the Castlehill, the King's Park, and *Leith Pier*, are the promenades particularly pointed out as most frequented by the public. Judge, then, how the race and order of turners have felt of late at seeing the *end* of the pier, or what had been the end from time immemorial, converted into a middle, by the elongation of the mole towards the Martello Tower! Was not that a matter for despair? A friend, who enters fully into the feelings and associations of "the turners," is of belief that they have not yet acknowledged the wooden addition as a part of the *pier proper*; just as some stately old government of the east of Europe might refuse to sanction a new-set-up country made out of a province in the west, and which pretended to have a king of its own. They cannot away with this unseemly upstart thing, or piece of work, which has disturbed their souls with new and untoward ideas. In short, the novelty of the lengthened pier has destroyed all their comfort in this walk; and while the managers of the work are congratulating themselves and the public on its advantages for the harbour, they little think how much mischief it has occasioned among the TURNERS.*

* The English and provincial reader will, it is hoped, make some allowance for the locality of this article: there is little reason to doubt that corresponding characters are to be found standing in the same relation to corresponding places in and about every large town in the empire. The Editors

DANGLERS.

"By the bye, do you know who that genteel-looking young man is, that I see constantly hanging about the Wilsons? Go where I will, I am sure to see him along with one or other of the young ladies. Last Wednesday night, having occasion to call on Mrs Wilson about the character of a servant, whom did I see stuck up in a corner of the sofa but this same young gentleman, discussing with Miss Jessy, if I understood it rightly, the merits of a patent thread-paper? I next night saw him with them in the pit of the Theatre, the third seat from the orchestra; and I am positive that he is ten times oftener in their seat at church than in his own, wherever that may be." Such is the sort of question that some well-meaning but curious female controller-general of society puts on observing a dangler in high practice. The dangles are a class of young men belonging to some idle profession, who are never happy unless they be on terms of intimate acquaintance in families having one or two daughters come to a marriageable time of life. Having effected an introduction, it is impossible to tell how—most likely at a soiree, where he made quite a sensation by dancing the *Lancers* in a first-rate style, or through means of another dangler or friend of the family, or, what is more likely still, through acquaintance with a brother of the young ladies, picked up at a fencing school—the dangler falls into a habit of dropping in at all seasons; and in a short time, from being a good-looking young man, and of tolerable address, becomes a privileged person in the household. If there be any dinner, tea, or supper party, Mr Brown is sure to be put down first in the list, or is there of his own accord; and from his fre-

at the same time hope that the burlesque which lurks at the bottom of the article will be obvious enough to satisfy those who consider the trespasses of the turners in their more serious light.

quent appearances on such occasions, a certain kind of *understanding* as to his motives prevails among all descriptions of regular visitors. The dangler thus makes himself a species of necessary evil in the family. He brings all the floating small-talk of the town to the young ladies; speaks to them about concerts, players, and charity sermons; helps the tea-kettle, and has a habit of saying "allow me," and making a movement as if to rise, when any thing is to be lifted; converses on the prevailing colour in the new winter dresses, and leads the laugh when any thing droll is mentioned. When Miss Jessie and Miss Sally go out for a walk, or on any errand of duty, the dangler has a knack of hitting the exact time they are to leave the house, and, with an inclination, offers his arm, but always has a tendency to be on the side next Miss Jessie. "At kirk or at market," the dangler acts the obliging young man, being equally ready to carry a parasol, or look out the place in the Bible or Psalmbook. The dangler, in short, is indefatigable in his services, and so, as a matter of course, all the world put him down as a favoured suitor of one or other of the young ladies. "Take my word for it," says Mrs. Gavine to her friend Mrs. Brotherstone, "it is a set thing that young Tom Brown is after Jessie Wilson, and there's no doubt he'll get her too. I'm sure they've been long enough in making it up at any rate; for, to my certain knowledge, he used to call when they lived in George Street, and that is more than three years since." "Indeed," replies the party addressed, "I'm not so sure about it as all that. I have always had my own opinion that he is one of those flirting fellows that never know their own mind for three minutes at a time, and, whatever they do, take always good care never to come to the point. However, I dare say he gets enough of encouragement, and they may take their own way of it, for me. Had the father not been a poor silly man, he would have settled the matter long ere this." There are strong grounds for belief that Mrs. Brotherstone is not far from the truth in her opinion

of our hero, Mr Brown. Under the indistinct idea that he is in love with a young lady, when he is no such thing, the dangling genteel young man haunts her wherever she goes, gets recognised by her father or mother as a suitable enough match for their daughter, flirts about her for a year or two, without, be it remarked, ever having spoken a word to her of personal esteem or attachment, yet insinuated himself so far into her good graces by his actions and looks—his everlasting dangling—that he knows he could get her at any time for the asking: then, behold when he sees he can secure another with a better fortune, or, in his eyes, some other great recommendation, he leaves the long assiduously-courted young lady to pine over her solitary fate. How often is this the case in the middle ranks of life! How many hundreds and thousands of amiable young women have had cause to rue that they ever gave any permanent encouragement to a dangler! Such a character acts like a blight on the fate of a young lady; for he not only consumes her valuable time, and distracts her feelings, but prevents real and modest admirers from making advances; wherefore in the end she has perhaps to marry a person of inferior respectability, or remain on the list of old maids. Such a result certainly constitutes dangling a high offence. Heedless of the havoc he is committing in the fate of the young lady; not reflecting that what has been simple killing of time or amusement to him has been protracted torture to a sensitive female, who probably all the while pardons him, from the impression that he is only waiting till he can conveniently make a declaration, he either starts off after a new object, or grows cool in his attentions, after the bloom of her youth is fled. Yet we have known dangles deservedly caught in their own cunning devices. The eldest daughter of the family, to whom he has long been in his own opinion attached, is carried off, as it were, out of his very grasp, when he thought himself most secure; and he probably enters into a campaign of dangling with the younger; but she is also married before he has time to

make up his resolution, and he is left in a queerish, desolate condition. In such cases we have known the dangler of half-a-dozen years pretend to feel hurt, and actually "wonder" how Miss Wilson or Miss Any-body-else "was in such a hurry to get off, for it was well known to *her* that nobody felt so much attached to her as *himself*." Such is the nonsense of a disconcerted dangler. He breaks his acquaintance with the family "which has used him so very ill," and looks about him for means of revenge in marrying some "extraordinary great match." He procures an acquaintance with the accomplished and elegant Miss Blackitt, who lives with her aunt in the Crescent, and who, it is currently reported, has three thousand pounds at her own disposal, besides expectations from her uncle, the lieutenant-colonel in India. The aunt, who is a knowing hand in the science of dangling, encourages his addresses, but takes care not to be long in fixing him, by asking him with an air (some day about twenty minutes past twelve o'clock, when he had called in a pair of washed gloves to escort the young lady to the Exhibition) "what his intentions are regarding her niece." Of course, Mr Brown protests—rather in a flutter, however—that his "intentions" are beyond all measure "honourable." The marriage in such a case soon ensues, and the dangler is delightfully noosed with a girl who, according to the report of the controllers-general of the neighbourhood, "cannot put on her own clothes," "who has not a penny of fortune," no expectations from her uncle in India—he being a married man with five mulatto daughters—and who, consequently, to sum up the story, must make the dangler miserable for all the rest of his life.

THE WIFE-CARLE.*

Nothing can be more obvious to remark, than that some people bear less of the characteristics of their own than of the opposite sex. We meet every day in life with clever, masculine, roughish characters in female attire, who perhaps do no grace whatever to their own sex, but yet, as every body conspires to say of them, "would make excellent men." On the other hand, we as often find a quiet tame kind of man, who has all the features of the old wife about him, even in his one-and-twentieth year, and who, vacillating as it were between the two sexes, is despised by his fellow-men, and hardly tolerated by the women, with whom he is so constantly seeking to consort, and whose manners he seems so anxious to imitate.

An individual of the latter kind is distinguished in his earliest petticoats—even before he has well left the nursery. He is then a poor, peepy wretch, with bleary eyes, and one everlasting dingy nightcap, constantly sitting by the fire, to the great annoyance of the nurse, who frequently declares him to be more of an infant than even his younger brother the baby. As he grows up, instead of falling into the ranks of other boys, and coming home occasionally with his garments rent from top to bottom, or two of his fore-teeth borne by his side on the boards of his book, or any other jolly mischance, such as boys are so perpetually falling into, he still clings to the fireside, where he does a thousand little good offices for the culinary deities, by whom, nevertheless, he is far less kindly treated than the rudest of his brethren. He is even perhaps caught some day playing at the pall-all with the girls, or perhaps snug

* This article appeared in the 49th number of the Journal, under the title of *The Domestic Man*. That title, having appeared to some to convey a kind of sarcasm at various highly estimable virtues, is here changed for one which is perhaps in some respects more appropriate.

in one of the remotest corners of their channel-stone houses, and trying with all his pains to make up a flower-plot for them with the heads of decapitated cowslips. He is then, if a Scottish boy, fairly in for the nickname of "the lassie," than which nothing could well be more intolerable to most boys, though in his case it is submitted to with a helpless and dawdling resignation. As years advance, he becomes a careful copyer of all kinds of useful family receipts from old books and newspapers. In a commonplace book which he keeps, the first entry is, "a way to make good ink," then "another way to make ink," and then a way "to make red ink"—though, be it remarked, he has no earthly prospect of ever acting upon these receipts. He has also a box, secured by a small padlock, wherein he has gathered thousands of little odd articles, which he barter with less adroit, though perhaps more robust companions, for things of greater value; sometimes adding to his stock by exchanging three rides of his father's horse to the water for a penknife, or giving a trifling toy for some solidly useful article, to which its possessor had become indifferent, but always taking care that the thing got shall be a degree better than the thing given.

When individuals of this kind reach their twenty-second or twenty-third year, it is clearly perceived that they are to become wife-carles. Some prophesy that their wives will have an easy time of it with them, so attentive are they, and so thoroughly versed in all the most approved rules of conducting an establishment: others maintain that their spouses will be rendered miserable, by the endless interferences of the gentleman, and by the difficulty of satisfying the expectations of persons so finical; but on one thing all are agreed, namely, that there is no chance of their long continuing bachelors.

Well, married they certainly are, sooner than most other young fellows; for their accurate and sedulous habits fit them to be good men of business, and they speedily obtain a settlement in life. Now it is that their darling occupa-

tions may be properly said to commence, and their qualifications to be most strikingly and usefully developed. Their pleasure lies in home, and they set in good earnest about making it delightful. They draw around them, with incredible pains, comforts and conveniences of every kind, and their ingenuity is exerted in a thousand ways to accomplish objects which to most people would appear trifling in the extreme, but which are to them of the highest importance. Abroad, our heroes are a good deal laughed at for what are called their fiddle-faddling propensities. They employ as much pains to demonstrate to you the propriety and possibility of saving twopence in some matter of household expense once a-year, as another would do to elucidate and enforce a scheme of retrenchment which was to lessen the burdens of the nation by as many millions. They grudge no part of the price of an article except the halfpenny which goes to complete the sum; but they grudge *it* grievously; and what other people pay a shilling for, it is the study and business of their lives to procure equally good for elevenpence-halfpenny. Infinite is the labour they bestow to carry their point; and as they are indefatigable, so they are in the end generally successful. This habit of being solicitous about trifles lowers them, as has been said, not a little in the estimation of many. But it is surprising what an impression is produced upon one who has made them the subject of ridicule, if he pay a visit to the house of a wife-carle, and become a witness of the effects of a judicious economy. He is compelled to acknowledge the superior tact of his friend, when he observes the regularity of his household arrangements: there is nothing wanting, and nothing where it should not be; every thing is good of its kind, and adjusted with the nicest skill. Every article around him has its history. Not one of them but was procured by the intervention of a number of trusty agents, and by a series of skilful negotiations. He is not one of those witless persons, who, when a thing can no longer be wanted, have no other resource

but to go straight into the market and buy it ; he sees a long way before him, by which means he has time not only to look about and make a choice, but to be cautious in closing a bargain, and to obtain the best terms by appearing not to care whether he get the goods or not. Then he has numerous friends, through whose interest with tradesmen he procures things both better and cheaper than customary. Thus his cellar is stocked, not by a general order to a spirit merchant ; but he knows a person who has a near relation connected with a brewery, and through this medium he is supplied with superior porter and ales ; he has a fifth, sixth, or seventh cousin, who in a voyage to the Low Countries contracted a friendship with a Dutch captain—so he is secure of the best Hollands ; he possesses channels of communication even with the Highland smugglers, and would scorn to offer a guest any thing but the genuine peat-reek. Every thing comes to him from authentic sources in the same manner, and the secret history of all his various transactions furnishes him with never-failing subjects of conversation. It is in this sphere that the owner feels the triumph of his genius, and he sets himself down in the midst of the comforts he has accumulated—a happy man.

We shall only specify one particular in which the talents of the wife-carle shine pre-eminent. Reader, were you ever in Edinburgh after a fall of snow which had continued for three days without intermission ? Bands of labourers issue forth, armed with shovels, to clear the pavements, in doing which they throw up an entrenchment of snow on each side of the street, so high that the few passengers cannot discern more than the hats of those on the opposite footpath. The voice of the fishwives is silent, and not a cart attempts a passage through the streets. A physician's carriage may be observed here and there dragged slowly along by four horses, and a hackney coach making its way still more slowly, the additional horses yoked with traces manifestly got up for the occasion, being formed of ropes

not of the freshest kind. All intercourse and business seems to be at a stand for the time, and the only thing people can do is to remain at home, and read in the newspapers accounts of roads blocked up in every direction, and of valorous mail-coach guards, who, when their vehicles could be taken no farther, abandoned them, and, through paths knee-deep with snow, and with the drift coming absolutely in shovelfuls into their faces, carried the bags in safety to the next post-town. In this period of desolation *the price of coal mounts rapidly*. This is a matter which comes home to the toes and fingers of every man, and the panic is consequently great and universal. As is usual in times of alarm, exaggeration flies abroad, and represents the case in its worst colours. Reports are propagated that there is not a ton in store, either at the canal or railway depot. On every side are echoed expressions of dismay and of astonishment that the dealers should have been so exceedingly improvident; and then, again, people check themselves by the reflection, that even although plenty of coals could be bought at the accustomed stations, there is no possibility of getting them conveyed home. Many an anxious and unwonted countenance is intruded, by way of committee of inquiry, into the gloomy regions of the coal-hole; and the cave of Trophonius had no such effect in lengthening the features of those who visited it, as is produced by the investigation of these empty, and therefore dismal recesses. Numbers of gentlemen, corpulent and otherwise, return with the appalling intelligence to their families, and abandon themselves to despair by the side of their expiring parlour fires, the wintry wind whistling a dreary chorus to their lamentations. In the midst of this universal consternation, the wife-carle remains undismayed. Harassed by no anticipations of uncooked victuals, and of fingers blue with cold, he lifts his poker, smashes a large piece of coal in the grate, and plants himself for business or relaxation in front of a fire that bids frost and the fear of it avaunt. His winter stock of fuel was laid in long be-

fore, of the best kind, and at a reasonable rate ; and he has now the satisfaction of lending a small quantity to boil the pot of Mr Temporary, who, when he saw the carts unloading their culmy stores at the door of his provident neighbour, thought he had made a hit in twitting him, that " surely he meant to roast an election dinner in his house."

A TALE OF THE PASSIONS.

ON the east coast of Scotland, there is a pleasant little village, within a quarter of a mile of the sea, chiefly inhabited by fishermen. Of this place I was, about thirty years ago, an inhabitant ; and as I am fond of observing the lights and shades in character among the lower class, where in general concealment of the natural disposition is least practised, I quickly got acquainted with my humble neighbours. It was thus not long before I knew the history, and could estimate the feelings, of many individuals, who, though unknown to fame, passed not away without leaving a moral lesson behind them. In most small communities there is some one who is singled out by their fellows as possessing some advantage over them, which is either real or imaginary. Among the dwellers in this sequestered spot, there was an old woman, named Margaret Dun, who was honoured by a celebrity arising from a cause which will be at once acknowledged to come under the head of the latter. I have said honoured, but it may be doubted whether the term is properly applied, when it is told, that, instead of the name I have mentioned, that of *Peg the Witch* was more frequently applied to her. How she first acquired her reputation as an emissary of Satan, I could not learn. Probably it was from her sagacity in frequently prophesying about her neighbours' concerns what came to pass, and from her possessing a bold determined spirit, which seldom

failed to carry her through any enterprise in which she engaged, and which caused her to be more prosperous in her domestic concerns than is generally the fate of those in her class who do not possess the same energy of mind. Be this as it may, the light in which she was regarded by the people around her, made her view their ignorance with scorn, not unmixed with resentment, and had the effect of confining her sympathies within the narrow boundary of her own family, where she ruled with an undisputed and despotic sway. But though her authority over her children was imperious, it was in general cheerfully obeyed, for she was neither peevish nor sullen in her intercourse with them, and had always attended so diligently to all their wants, that they both loved and respected her.

At the time I first became acquainted with this woman, she had recently lost some of her children, and her family then consisted only of two sons and her husband. John Dun, the gudeman, was a mason by trade, and considered so clever at his business, that there was hardly a house or onstead erected for many miles round without his aid. Being thus much employed at a distance from home, his wife became the entire manager of the money earned by his industry, and laid it out so judiciously, that his cottage exhibited many little comforts unknown in those of his less fortunate neighbours. This was so apparent to all, that it excited a degree of envy, which continued to account for it in the old way; and many were the rumours that reached her ears of the effect of the supernatural gifts with which she was supposed to be endowed. Indignant at their folly, and wearied by their obstinate adherence to it, she at length determined to use her imputed character as a means of making the whole village subservient to her will; nor was there one individual who had the hardihood to resist it. I have no doubt but much of this strange influence was owing to the peculiar situation of the place, and the occupation of its inhabitants, whose bread was procured on the face of the mighty deep. Sailors in gene-

ral are prone to superstition, and it is in vain that the well-educated and firm-minded among them deny the charge. The waters of the sea are as a mighty veil thrown over innumerable mysteries ; and where is the sailor or the fisherman who has not in fancy, amid a lonely watch, had it partially lifted, and some of them revealed to him—who has not held some communication with the world beneath him, and is thus led to believe that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in the philosophy of landsmen ? The superstition of the ignorant leads to a belief in charms and amulets, and none of Margaret's neighbours would venture to sea without having about his person a piece of the mountain-ash, or, as it is more usually called in Scotland, the rowan-tree, which flourished in her little garden. Happy was the man who received this valuable boon from her own hand, for then a portion of her good-will was supposed to go with this potent charm, which ensured him a prosperous voyage and a boatful of fish, some of which he seldom failed to appropriate to her use. In short, had Margaret's disposition been greedy, she might have exacted from her poor neighbours all her living ; but she contented herself with now and then receiving voluntary gifts, and only hinting to the small farmers in the neighbourhood that they might bring her home a sack or two of coals on their carts from the pits, free of the costs of carriage. At the time of casting peats, a similar hint was given, and each one at the moss contributed a share toward the stack destined for her use.

Thus things went on for some years, till her eldest son attained the age of twenty, and her youngest, of seventeen years, and she lost her husband, who was killed by a fall from a building. Her eldest son now took the place of his father, for both he and his brother had been bred to their father's business, and the son and apprentice of so good a workman did not fail to find employment. Still his winnings, it may be supposed, were not equal to his father's. This, however, was no source of discontent to his mother,

as long as they were all poured into her lap, and as long as she was obeyed, and her absolute sway still submitted to. But the time came when each succeeding week showed her, in some instance, that a change in the disposition of her first-born was rapidly taking place; and as she watched him with a jealous eye, she saw him gradually beginning to assert his independence as the chief supporter of the family. While her husband lived, she had ruled her sons with unquestioned authority, nor ever seemed to dream of any change taking place in her right of control. James now no longer owned this authority as to his movements, but took work near or at a distance, just as it suited his fancy, without asking her consent; and when reproved by his mother, and threatened with her severe displeasure, he got angry, and so far forgot himself as to threaten in return. This was something altogether new to the imperious spirit of the widowed woman, whose will had so seldom been disputed. It seemed more bitter to her than if all the rest of mankind had risen up against her, that the son who used to submit, without reply, to all her mandates, should break through the trammels of the strict government to which she had subjected him from infancy, and brave all at once her utmost displeasure. It was too much for the indulged and haughty spirit of one who had, in her humble sphere, reigned in-doors and out; and though these struggles for the mastery between her and her eldest son lasted for a while, they became at length too violent to admit of their dwelling together. James did not, however, leave his mother's house without regret. Though he possessed too much of her own evil pride to confess it, and endeavoured to salve his conscience for taking so rash a step by persuading himself that he was forced to it by his mother's harshness, yet, had he understood and done justice to her feelings, he would not have wounded them so deeply; he would have recollected that much of the stern manner of which he complained had been the result of the peculiar situation in which she had been placed, for he was not ig-

forant of the aspersions which it pleased her foolish neighbours to cast upon her. He would also have felt, that, if she had ruled her children strictly, she had ever shown that she loved them with an intensity, out of which, in fact, their present quarrels had arisen; for she was tormented with a jealous fear that she had lost her influence over his heart as well as over his conduct. Something of all this did come across and smite the conscience of James, after he had quitted his mother's house, and he returned to tell her, that though he could not live with her any longer, it was his intention to give her half of his wages. This offer was, however, rejected by the misguided mother, with scorn and acrimony, as a bounty which was to be doled forth to her by a son who was voluntarily forsaking her, and depriving her, in her old age, of his society and protection; and, full of this bitter feeling, she exhausted every epithet of contumely and reproach, until the young man, who, I have said, possessed but too much of her own unhallowed spirit, was so exasperated, that he rushed from under the roof where he had drawn his first breath, with an oath never to enter beneath it again. Little, alas! did he dream of the dark future, or of the fate that was once more to place him under its shelter; and as little did the mother anticipate the burden of woe she was laying up in store for herself, while giving way to her evil pride—that unhallowed passion, with which no Christian virtue can dwell, and which blights alike the intercourse of mortals with heaven and with earth. Three years passed away without any reconciliation taking place between James and his offended mother, in whose heart there still rankled the deepest resentment against him. But during the third year, this hostility was less painful, as he removed from the village, in consequence of obtaining a large and lucrative job about thirty miles distant from the coast.

It was in one of my solitary rambles by the sea-side that I encountered Margaret some time after her eldest son left the village. She was sitting on a little grassy hillock,

under the shelter of a hedge, which grew wildly over the spot. At some little distance, on the sea-beach, I perceived a number of women and children, who had assembled there for the purpose of procuring fuel. While the women were digging up the stubborn roots of the whin, the elder children were every now and then bringing portions of them, which they reared in little heaps on the grass round the place where Margaret sat, her share of the task being to direct them in the dividing of the roots into pieces of a convenient size for carrying home, and to pick out what she chose for herself.

I had been in the habit of visiting Margaret's cottage for some years, and now greeting her as an acquaintance, I sat down beside her. This woman had been handsome in her youth, and, now at the age of nearly sixty, was yet so, in as far as she still retained her tall form unbent, and her dark eye undimmed, while her coal-black hair was but slightly grizzled. After the first salutations had passed, I remarked that I had not seen her youngest son for some time, and inquired where he was, when she informed me he had gone some distance up the country to build dykes for a gentleman who lived near, but had a distant farm, and gave him the most of his work when at home. "And this being the case," she continued, "I could not refuse to let him go; but I have had many an eerie night since he left me; for when he is at home, I never get leave to weary." Here I remarked what a fine-looking young man he had grown, and that I was happy to hear he was so good a son. Margaret fixed upon me her keen eyes, which sparkled with delight. "Ay," she said; "is not my Willie a gallant youth?—he is six feet high, and not out twenty years of age yet. He may match ony gentle in the land for look part, and is as guid as he is bonny; and weel does he make up to me for all I hae lost. Oh," she continued with fervour, "he is husband, and son, and daughter to me; may God bless him for it!"

Every look and tone of voice vouched for the truth of

what she said, and told that she had set up this youth as the idol of her heart, and given him there that place which it is sin to bestow on one of earthly mould. All recollection of her eldest son seemed to have passed away from her mind, for she never, as I was informed, alluded to him on any occasion. I ventured, nevertheless, to ask where James was, and to express a hope that they were better friends. As I uttered these words, she rose up with her face flushed, and her eyes flashing with anger, and giving me an indignant glance, she said haughtily, "Hardly ony body is sae unceevil as to mention him to me."

Grieved to see that she still cherished this implacable spirit, but no way daunted by her displeasure, I still went on. "Nay, do not be angry with me for interfering. I did but speak in the hope of hearing that you were reconciled to him, and had repented of what I could not help considering your harsh conduct to a son who always seemed really well inclined, and had the character in the main of being both dutiful and affectionate."

"And wha," she said, erecting her tall person, and looking me sternly in the face, "shall take upon them to judge the ill-used and disappointed mother—her wha brought him into the world wi' mickle pain and risk o' life; and nourished him at her breast wi' toil and watchfu' care; and prided her heart in him, as he grew to be a man; and thought to hae him aye beside her to look upon, and be her lamp o' light in the darkness o' her age? Wha, I say, shall dare to say to me, repent: or judge me for my rightfu' displeasure?"

"Surely, Margaret," I said earnestly, "we must forgive before we can hope to be forgiven. Nor do I doubt that James would humble himself to ask your pardon, did you give him any hope that you would grant it."

"Na, na," she said, with a smile of bitter irony, "he manna forswear himself, ye ken; and he took an oath when he left me, never more to enter below my roof. Ah, na: if ought should ail her winsome Willie, the auld mother

may starve in her old age and solitude, for ought that he cares."

I was about to combat this uncharitable and harsh opinion, but she cut me short, by turning away suddenly, and calling to some of the children, who instantly flocked about her, to bind up the portions of fuel she had selected for her own use. While she was allotting to each the burden they were to carry to her cottage, I continued my walk by the sea-side, musing on what had just passed, and lamenting the obstinate perversity of disposition in this old woman, which spurned at the thought of receiving again to her favour a son who had once been so dearly loved. I felt, however, that it was vain to reason with one who had evidently shut her eyes upon the light of Christian precept, and allowed some of the worst passions of our nature to gain the mastery over her. And as I determined never again to attempt so hopeless a task, I could not help shuddering at the idea of the scene which the deathbed of one so remorseless was likely to present. It was long before I again saw Margaret, and her cup of sorrow had been meanwhile filled up to the brim. The particulars which follow, I learnt partly from common report, and partly from the village pastor, who, being a worthy pious man, frequently visited Margaret, and used unwearied pains to conquer her indomitable pride. It was from him I heard that her son William's stay up the country had been protracted much beyond the time she expected, and that she had been sorely disturbed, by hearing that he was much with his brother, who lived near to the place where his work lay; and still more by a report, that he was often seen in the company of a young woman, who, when a child, had lived in the same village with him, and, though of good character, was an orphan of the most destitute description, being one of those unfortunates of whose birth both parents being ashamed, she had been abandoned by them, and laid down at the door of the schoolmaster's house, to be brought up by the parish. I have said, Mar-

garet was disturbed by this report, which annoyed her the more, as she remembered that her son and this young person had always shown a fondness for each other when children at school, and that she had felt pleased when the girl left the village for a more distant service. The time, however, soon came when she was no longer left to doubt on the subject, for William arrived and confirmed her worst fears, by asking her consent to marry this girl, and bring her home to live with her. This consent was sternly and flatly denied; and though he assured her that he had procured permanent work, which, with the industry of his Mary, would enable them all to live in comfort, her only answer was, that no wife of his should ever live with her; and that, if he was determined to marry before he laid her head in the grave, he might leave her as his brother had done. When William found that all his efforts were vain to reconcile his mother to his wishes, he returned to finish his job with a mind totally undecided what course to pursue. In this dilemma he sought the counsel of his brother, who advised him to marry, and trust to the necessity his mother would soon feel of a reconciliation; at the same time assuring him that he would go with him, and tell her of his own repentance of his rash oath, and join in entreaties for the pardon of both. We are too prone to believe what we ardently wish; and William, thus persuaded by his brother, and by his own inclination, prevailed upon Mary to consent to become his wife, a few days before he returned to his native village to deprecate the wrath of his mother. Many were the conjectures of the brothers during their long walk toward their mother's cottage, on the success of their enterprise; nor could they, as they approached it more nearly, prevent some misgivings which assailed them, and gained strength as they presented themselves at her door. It was there she met them; and having stopped them till their story was told, it was in vain that they craved permission to enter within it, for it was soon closed upon them, after a short parley, in which the old woman, in her

own strong and scornful language, utterly rejected all overtures toward peace, and reiterated her determination of living and dying in desolation. It was then, that, had she possessed the supernatural powers attributed to her, the shafts of her utmost vengeance would have been launched against the girl who had dared to alienate from her the affections of her son, and thus deprive her of her last hope. She had indeed now spurned from her for ever the blessings offered to her by Providence, and filled up the measure of her sin and folly.

The two young men, who were greatly distressed by their mother's unnatural conduct, and tired and heated by their long walk, sought, when they parted from her, rest and refreshment in the village public-house, from whence they strolled down to the sea-beach. This had been the playground of their infancy; and having sat for some time on the beach in deep consultation, the eldest one stripped off his clothes, and plunged into the sea to refresh himself by bathing. The sea was calm and glassy, and he swam about for a few minutes; but while his brother was looking at him, and preparing to follow, he all at once went down. This was no sooner observed by William than he hastily threw himself into the water, and having swam out to the fatal spot where his brother disappeared, he also sunk to rise no more. Some boys who had been looking on, flew to the village to give the intelligence. Numbers immediately repaired to the spot where the melancholy event had taken place, while others ran to procure boats and grappling-tackle from a little neighbouring bay where their fishing-boats were moored. The search was, however, rendered vain, by the discovery that a quantity of loose sand forming a ridge had been lodged between two rocks, on which it was supposed the elder brother had attempted to gain a footing, and been instantly swallowed up by its closing above him. It was supposed, also, that the younger one had been deceived in the stable appearance of the quicksand, and had endeavoured to ascend it in order

to look for his brother in the deep water beyond it. Be this as it may, the search, as I have said, was fruitless; and thus perished, in the very prime of their health and strength, two of the finest-looking young men I had ever beheld.

During the whole day on which this tragical incident took place, the sea was perfectly calm; but at night one of those violent but brief storms which sometimes disturb the tranquillity of a summer sea, broke upon the coast, and the waves rolled in mountains to the shore. The sand was again shifted, and when the conflict of the elements had ceased, the brothers were both found stretched upon the beach. And she, the relentless and vindictive mother, how fared it now with her? True to her stern nature, she gave but small vent in words to her wretchedness; but the fearful cries she uttered when told the dreadful truth—every look—every sound—every movement—betokened the most intense agony of which the human breast is susceptible, and told of remorse the keenest and most horrible that could be borne out of the place of everlasting torment. Her retributive history seemed, indeed, as if marked in black and melancholy characters. No sooner were her sons lodged in their narrow bed in the village churchyard, than their grave became her nightly haunt; nor did she seem even to hear the entreaties made use of by her neighbours to keep her from this practice, till at length they desisted from the attempt. Whenever nightfall came to hide her from the eyes of the passers-by, she took her lonely and darkling way, nor ceased from her gloomy vigils till the morning began to break. My friend the minister visited her often, but was always foiled in his attempts to give her any spiritual consolation, by her brief but peremptory injunction not to speak to her on her soul's concerns, accompanied with a solemn assurance that it was in vain, for she knew and felt that she was doomed to destruction. But though this assertion was delivered in a tone which made him shudder, he nevertheless persisted in his unwel-

come visits, until an event happened, which formed a new era in the history of Margaret.

About ten days after the interment of the unfortunate brothers, the moon began to shine upon the place of tombs; and though she could no longer visit it without being observed, no one molested her, and she persisted in what now seemed a habit necessary to her very existence. One night when she approached her usual seat, she found it already occupied by a young woman, dressed in decent widow's mourning, whose sobs were deep and suffocating. Taken by surprise, and believing it to be the widow of her lost son come to reproach her with her cruelty, she fixed her eyes on her for an instant, and fell to the earth with a piercing shriek. The poor girl had been terrified by the sight of her mother-in-law, whose countenance, wild and stern, with her hair escaped from her cap, and tossed about in the wind, made her look like a maniac. Roused, however, by her shriek and fall, she sprung toward her, and finding that she was not insensible, she raised and seated her on the grave, while she spoke to her the most soothing words, and prayed so fervently to God to comfort her, that when Margaret looked upon her face, pale as death, but so meek and beautiful in its sorrow, and heard her breathe nothing but kindness, she felt a degree of astonishment, which took for a short time the place of all other emotions. There had hitherto been no feeling in her own breast which could lead her to comprehend the spirit of forgiveness and of meek resignation which dictated all the words and actions of this young woman. She had, before the death of her sons, regarded her with rancour, and, since that event, with dread of ever seeing her, as if her reproaches were now the only thing in the world left for her to fear. It was by this fear acting on a form wasted by want of sustenance, and by the conflicts of her mind, that she was struck down as by a flash of lightning.

The youthful Mary, whose history I have in part related, and who was in the same week a bride and widow,

had been early inured to misfortune. She had been taken into the house of the parish schoolmaster, when only nine years old, to assist his servant, but from her cleverness and desire to learn, had shared in his children's education, who were taught by him some things in which the poorer class of his scholars did not participate. Mary seemed naturally of a humble and serious disposition; but, humble as she was, she often felt severely the taunting scorn with which she was treated, on account of her birth, by her companions, and sometimes by those who should have known better than them, when she happened, unwittingly, to give offence. In short, she had never known any one who seemed to understand her feelings, or show them any sympathy, except her schoolfellow William Dun, who had always been ready to take her part when she was ill used, to console her when sorrowful, and to play on the sea-beach with her when she had time. But when Mary grew somewhat older and stronger, she was offered a service far from the sea and William, and these comforts were lost. It was then, when she had none on earth to sympathise either in her joys or griefs, that she learned to look up to a higher source for comfort, for pity, and direction; and was strengthened to be the means of snatching the wretched Margaret from the destruction she seemed to court.

When the first overpowering sensation occasioned by Mary's words and looks had subsided, the old woman so far relapsed into her usual mood, that the poor girl's utmost entreaties could not prevail on her to allow of her becoming an inmate of her cottage. Nor did she consent, till touched by the earnestness with which Mary quoted the affecting words of Ruth—"Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge."

This, however, seemed the last struggle of self-will in that breast which had ever been the seat of turbulent and rebellious passions; and from that night in which her daughter-in-law returned with her from the churchyard,

might be dated a change in her disposition as salutary as it was surprising. The proud nature of Margaret, broken down by suffering, and a heart goaded by remorse, prepared her for embracing the promises of mercy held out to her. These promises were constantly read to her and commented upon by Mary, who was become as her better angel, and whose unwearied attention soothed the few remaining years of her life, and was rewarded by seeing her hitherto stubborn nature daily softening down, till she became docile as a child in the school of Christianity. Still her heart felt, and her tongue expressed, all the hallowing and blessed effects of religion. Mary's constant efforts in behalf of her mother-in-law were of use to herself, for they gave her less time to dwell on her own sorrows; and the pale and interesting features of this meek and humble sufferer soon assumed an expression of subdued pensiveness, which, if it forbade the idea that they could ever be lighted up by mirth or gaiety, gave an assurance of inward peace and pious contentment. Temporal blessings also followed Mary to the cottage of Margaret; for her father, of whom she had never known any thing till his death, being a man of some property, and feeling remorse, it would appear, in his last illness, for his cruel conduct towards her, left her, by his will, soon after her change of residence, enough to support herself, and to supply the poor old woman with all those little comforts so necessary to old age and declining health, till the day arrived, when, full of true penitence, Margaret was laid in the same grave on which she had so often sat in all the wildness and horror of despair.

ENGLISH AND SCOTCH HOUSE-BUILDING.

THE English build their houses of brick, and the Scotch of stone. These peculiarities of taste and habit are so strongly associated with the character of the two nations, that they may be frequently observed wherever the English and Scotch are planted, especially in foreign countries. When a Scotsman crosses the Border, at almost any point, he wonders how the people come to have such a predominating taste for brick. Every house he sees seems to be built with no other material, and all the towns and villages he travels through seem but piles of so many brick-kilns set in rows. As he proceeds, he gets accustomed to this, as it appears to him, very strange fancy; but he always feels a certain degree of pity for those who are doomed to inhabit houses with walls so very thin, and so little able to keep out the cold. When an Englishman, in the same manner, enters Scotland, he is apt to be as much surprised at finding that the houses are all reared of solid stone, like so many castles or public edifices; and he is led to imagine that the Scotch are really an extravagant people in building their dwellings with a material so dear and difficult to be wrought. When the Scotch settle in England, they generally conform to the fashion of brick houses; but an Englishman, on emigrating northward, will try, if possible, to resist the national custom, and erect his cottage with his dearly beloved brick. These contrary tastes are very observable in Ireland: the English in the south—in Dublin for instance—adhering staunchly to brick, and the Scotch in the north sticking to the stone, which is so characteristic of their country.

Some persons might be led to suppose that these diversities of taste in the architecture of dwelling-houses are the result of necessity; but they are by no means entirely so. In many parts of England which are covered with brick houses, the district abounds in excellent stone; while in

Scotland, in places where clay is plentiful and stone is scarce, the latter material is transported by land carriage, at a heavy charge, in preference to brick, which could be easily and cheaply made. In erecting a brick house, the Englishman makes a point of consulting his own comfort, and that of his family. He rears his dwelling with every imaginable convenience; sections it off into neat snug apartments, almost calculating where his own easy-chair is to stand by the fireside; surrounds the house with a pretty kitchen and flower-garden; encloses the whole with a smart green railing; and finishes his goodly work by attaching to the wicket a clear-burnished fanciful brass knocker. Now, the Scotsman's taste runs in an entirely different channel. He sets about his work by going through certain toilsome preliminaries, which are considered of paramount importance. His first object of search is a quarry whence he may have his stones dug, and transported to the spot where they are to be used; his second point of inquiry is for a place to which he may convey the rubbish excavated from the foundation. When he has satisfied himself in these particulars, he commences operations on a scale of wonderful magnitude. He begins with the erection of a wooden house, something resembling the loghut of a backwoodsman, which he plants immediately in front of the proposed edifice, as if preparing to besiege a fortress in regular form. The erection of this wooden house, technically called a *shed*, can on no account be dispensed with. In it he congregates half-a-dozen stone-masons, who there dress the blocks previous to their being used; but this preliminary erection occasionally stands long after the house is actually finished, and appears as if it were reckoned an ornament to the street. The Englishman erects and finishes his house within the period of a month or two; but the Scotsman keeps working at his for the better part of a whole year, generally contriving to commence his labours with the first appearance of fine weather at the close of winter, so as to make sure of having the roof on and

the walls plastered before Christmas. The Englishman erects his house for the comfort of those who are immediately to inhabit it, but the Scotsman invariably calculates on its uses to his posterity, or how "the property" will serve as a legacy to his descendants. He appears to take a great delight in building for future ages; and in order to make up a good rent-roll for his grandson, he will put himself to great inconveniences. The Englishman builds his house because he has two or three hundred pounds to spare, and thinks it could not be better laid out than on a dwelling for his family; and he builds a house accordingly, suitable to the capital he has at his command. The Scotsman, however, very seldom contents himself in this manner. His desire to be the laird of a large edifice, often impels him to go much beyond his means, and by borrowing the deficiency, entails a comfortable debt on the premises, which his sons or his creditors have the pleasure of liquidating. So frequently, indeed, is this the result of such speculations, that it is a common enough expression, in explaining how a particular individual became bankrupt, to say "that he never rested till he built himself out of a house;" in other words, he did not desist till he had spent all his means, exhausted his credit, lost his property, and become a ruined man.

These different processes of house-building are partly the result of the English and Scotch modes of letting land for long periods. In England, it is the common practice to take leases of ground for building for a period of ninety-nine years, or perhaps less; and for this piece of ground a certain rent is charged annually, with the arrangement that the houses on the property shall fall into the hands of the lord of the manor at the expiry of the lease; and hence, in a great measure, the plan of building houses which will not last in good repair for more than a hundred years. The Scotch being in every respect a more calculating people, despise the prospect of only a hundred years' possession—"what! some day to be turned out of our own house!"

They therefore take leases of ground which shall endure till the end of the world, and think themselves very badly off, indeed, when they are restricted to the brief period of nine hundred and ninety-nine years ! These perpetual leases they term *feus*, an expression importing that the lessee becomes *feudal* vassal of the ground landlord. "*Ground to Feu*," is therefore to be found on hundreds of signboards north of the Tweed, and to English visitants appears quite an incomprehensible announcement. In Edinburgh and its vicinity, the annual feu-duty is enormous, amounting sometimes to a charge of a guinea for every foot of ground in front ; and this has to be paid annually for ever, under the penalty of loss of the property.

One good results from this peculiar conduct on the part of the Scotch : it tends to encourage a superior kind of architectural designs, and greatly improves the general aspect of the country. There can be no proper comparison of the beauty of stone and brick, and the Scotch act very wisely in building stone houses, if they can afford the cost : but the general exercise of this refined taste has an injurious effect on society, and is spoiling the large towns in the north. It limits the proprietary to a mere unit ; raises up a body of large capitalists over the people, who are reduced to the character of yearly tenants ; and prolongs the very absurd custom of dividing houses into separate dwellings on the different floors. For example, there are few merchants, tradesmen, or shopkeepers in the large towns in Scotland, who live in what are termed self-contained houses ; for the simple reason, that they cannot afford to build, or even rent, a complete stone mansion. Yet they can frequently purchase a *flat* ; that is, a house up two, three, or four stairs ; whereas, for the sum they thus expend for a confined lodging, they could erect a sufficient brick house from top to bottom, calculated to last during the whole period of their own lives, and those of their immediate descendants. But the prejudices of society forbid that any such course should be pursued. " No, no ; do

not tell me of your shabby brick houses ; give me a *good flat* in a respectable part of the town, where we have no trouble with area doors, or are bothered to keep the roof in order, and I will leave those to go to self-contained houses that like them better, or are silly enough to pay for them."

THE BLUFF MUTTONEER.

Tantus amor ovis, atque gloria !—VIRGIL.

You may talk of your dandies, your bloods, and fine fellows,
And of all the gay creatures of Princes Street tell us ;
But in my estimation there's none that can peer
With that jolly good fellow, the Bluff Muttoneer.

Derry down, down, down derry down.

The Bluff Muttoneer ! would you have him before ye,
In all his majestic proportions and glory ?
Do you wish that the genuine man should appear ?
Then look, and I'll show you the Bluff Muttoneer.

Derry down, &c.

More sturdy than tall, to the fat just inclining ;
A belly whose jet shows some good capon lining ;
A swell derriere, over which dangle clear
The gaucy coat-tails of the Bluff Muttoneer.

Derry down, &c.

A visage as broad and as bright as the moon,
When she rises in autumn nine nights alike soon ;
And, like her when half-risen, half-hid, you would swear,
In the web round the neck of the Bluff Muttoneer.

Derry down, &c.

A hat o'er this visage cocks somewhat ajee,
As it was in the year eighteen hundred and three ;
A mouth for a joke, and an eye for a leer,
And a cane in the hand of the Bluff Muttoneer.

Derry down, &c.

And then of the causeway he walks on the crown,
With a sough in the air, would knock any man down ;
My faith, ye had better take care how ye steer,
When ye come near the track of the Bluff Muttoneer !

Derry down, &c.

For every thing's big 'bont this wonderful blade—
His look is a stare, and his voice a cascade ;
Ye had better shake hands wi' a Spitzbergen bear,
Or with a smith's vice, than a Bluff Muttoneer.

Derry down, &c.

Yet the Bluff Muttoneer has his softnesses too ;
To the friends of his heart he's both kindly and true ;
And good wether mutton he holds very dear,
And he's had his *attachments*—the Bluff Muttoneer.

Derry down, &c.

On port, now, and mutton, are placed his affections,
And for meaner things he has few predilections ;
That he still "likes the gi'ls," he sometimes will swear,
But it's all to no good with the Bluff Muttoneer.

Derry down, &c.

Should you ask him to dine, yet, forgetting his taste,
Give him only some kickshaws surrounded with paste ;
Alas, my good friend, they'd be viewed with a sneer,
Being nought in the hands of a Bluff Muttoneer.

Derry down, &c.

In case such an error you e'er should commit,
I'll tell you what things will his appetite hit,
So that you may invite him, without any fear
Of affronting—and starving the Bluff Muttoneer.

Derry down, &c.

Just have a good jigot—be sure it's a wether—
Five-year-old—Teviot fed—and a smack of the heather ;
A glass of good sherry—a glass of good beer—
Then port, at the will of the Bluff Muttoneer.

Derry down, &c.

See him planted at table with knife and with fork,
With what practised expertness he gets through his work !
How he knows when the moment of gorging is near,
And fills to a hair-breadth—the Bluff Muttoneer.

Derry down, &c.

With what constitutional horror he sees
Fellows keeping a corner for pancakes or cheese !
Such vile disregard of the principal cheer
Seems treason—or worse—to the Bluff Muttoneer.

Derry down, &c.

After dinner he talks of some Jockey Club case,
 Or what yesternight at the *Shakis** took place!
 Or he sings them a song with his whistle so clear,
 "If they'll join in the chorus"—the Bluff Muttoneer.

Derry down, &c.

His songs are the songs of his own early day,
 "Dear Tom, this brown jug," or, "In Trafalgar Bay;"
 Such things as "Young Love," or the "Calm Bendemeer,"
 Are all tol de rol lol with the Bluff Muttoneer.

Derry down, &c.

When at nine the *young men* make a move from their chairs,
 And say something 'bout joining the ladies up stairs,
 He gives them a look that their livers might spear,
 And "the more I won't come," thinks the Bluff Muttoneer.

Derry down, &c.

At length when the time has roll'd on to eleven,
 He ends with a glee, "To Anacreon in Heaven;"
 And beginning to feel rather muzzy and queer,
 Home staggers in glory the Bluff Muttoneer.

Derry down, &c.

THE LAND OF BURNS.

THIS phrase is used in reference to that district of Ayrshire, in Scotland, which has been consecrated by the history and writings of Robert Burns. It has happened, in the natural course of things, that, though the ingenious Bard of Ayrshire lived the life of a poor man, and perished, it may be said, miserably, in the very prime of his intellect and natural years, yet, as his productions have rather increased than diminished in fame, every little circumstance connected with him has now become matter of far greater interest and attention than what was bestowed, perhaps,

* A house which formerly existed under the name of Shakspeare's Tavern, near the Theatre-Royal Edinburgh—a great house

—"in the year eighteen hundred and three."

upon the man himself in his own lifetime. We therefore propose giving an account of the scenery of his birthplace, and of some of his most remarkable poems, in the hope that it may be the means of directing many a pilgrim's foot to what must certainly be described as one of the most endeared parts of all the romantic land of our fathers.

The county of Ayr constitutes a large part of the western coast of Scotland, to the south of the embouchure of the Clyde. Forming one large inclined plane towards the sea, it is intersected in its breadth by several rivers, such as the Irvine, the Ayr, and the Doon, all of which are rich in poetical association. The mouths of the Ayr and Doon approach within two miles of each other; and at the point where the former joins the sea, is situate the town of Ayr, having a finely cultivated country in one direction, and in the other a firth, bounded in the distance by the magnificent hills of Arran and Argyllshire. The choice part of the land scenery—and of this Burns seems to have been fully aware—is to be found on the banks of the rivers, especially the Ayr, which is certainly the means of forming a beautiful tract of woodlands. The Doon was the river of Burns's boyhood; the Ayr, of his youth and manhood.

BANKS OF DOON.

The poet was born in a clay-built and thatched cottage, on the highway which leads from Ayr to the southern parts of the county, and about two miles and a half from that town. Connected with it may still be traced the very small farm which the poet's father cultivated; and at a little distance is the ruin of Alloway Kirk, formerly a parochial place of worship, but long left to decay, on account of the parish being annexed to that of Ayr. The road, immediately after passing the cottage and the ruined church, crosses the Doon, by a modern bridge of one arch; and at the distance of a hundred yards farther up the river, is the "Auld Brig," so noted for its concern in the tale of Tam o' Shanter; a high narrow structure, after the fashion of a

former age, and now disused. On an eminence overlooking both bridges, and within a hundred yards of Alloway Kirk, stands a beautiful Grecian temple, erected some years ago after a design by the classic Hamilton, of Edinburgh, as a monument of the poet, and of his connection with this scenery. The whole range of objects, with many others of inferior importance, is comprised within the space of half a mile; and besides all the charm which genius has lent it, it must be described as possessing all the actual beauties of picturesque landscape—as, indeed, a remarkably pleasing specimen of river-side scenery, where the architecture of Athens is added to the rural graces of Thessaly.

The “auld clay bigging” in which the poet first saw the light, is now a neat whitened public-house, where an old acquaintance of the poet, John Goudie, formerly miller at Doonside Mill, has for the last thirty years refreshed the passing traveller, and acted as his cicerone. Both Mr and Mrs Goudie have their recollections of the poet, whom they at one time regarded and entertained as a rustic compeer, in no way remarkable, except, perhaps, for his outre manners, though his name alone has at last become their chief idea upon earth. They show the recess in which the poet was born, and relate the well-known incident of the house having been immediately after shattered by a storm, which rendered it necessary that his mother and himself should be removed to a neighbouring cottage—which also is shown—in order to avoid the ruin which was apprehended. The cottage was in those days, as now, composed of two rooms, one of them serving as the kitchen; and it was in that humbler part of the establishment that the poet, whose name has since filled the world, was first introduced to it. There was then no ceiling to the humble apartment; the eye, on travelling upwards, rested on the reverse of the thatched roof, beyond which there was nothing but the roof of heaven. It is pleasing to think that this humble dwelling is visited every year by thousands,

of whom the wealthiest and the proudest are as glad to survey its homely features, as are those who affect nothing beyond the poet's own honourable poverty. The most elegant and highly bred women, the most distinguished men of both our own and other countries, have stooped beneath the "lintel" of this rustic shed, and looked, with strangely varied feelings, upon the original home and nursing-place of what has since gone like sunlight over the whole earth. The number of the visitors is attested in a curious manner, by the surfaces of a pair of tables, which stand in the better part of the house. These pieces of furniture are so thickly mottled over with initials, inscribed by the penknives of individuals anxious to connect their own namelessness with the name of the poet, that they resemble some curious inlaid work, or the tattooed skin of the Indian, rather than what they were. In time they must become almost as curious and valuable objects as the tables of the Roman law.

Alloway Kirk, with its little enclosed burial-ground, next demands the pilgrim's attention. It has long been roofless, but the walls are pretty well preserved, and it still retains its bell at the east end. Upon the whole, the spectator is struck with the idea that the witches must have had a rather narrow stage for the performance of their revels, as described in the poem. The inner area is now divided by a partition wall, and one part forms the family burial-place of the late Mr Cathcart, who may perhaps be better known by his judicial designation of Lord Alloway. The "winnock bunker in the east," where sat the awful musician of the party, is a conspicuous feature, being a small window divided by a thick mullion. Around the building are the vestiges of other openings, at any of which the hero of the tale may be supposed to have looked in upon the hellish scene. Within the last few years, the old oaken rafters of the kirk were mostly entire, but they have now been entirely taken away, to form, in various shapes, memorials of a place so remarkably signalised by genius. It

is necessary for those who survey the ground in reference to the poem, to be informed that the old road from Ayr to this spot, by which Burns supposed his hero to have approached Alloway Kirk, was considerably to the west of the present one, which, nevertheless, has existed since before the time of Burns. Upon a field about a quarter of a mile to the north-west of the kirk, is a single tree enclosed with a paling, the last remnant of a group which covered

“_____ the cairn
Whare hunters fand the murdered bairn ;”

and immediately beyond that object is

“_____ the foord,
Whare in the snaw the chapman smooed ;”

(namely, a ford over a small burn which soon after joins the Doon); being two places which Tam o' Shanter is described as having passed on his solitary way. The road then made a sweep towards the river, and, passing a well which trickles down into the Doon, where formerly stood a thorn, on which an individual called in the poem “Mungo's mother” committed suicide, approached Alloway Kirk upon the west. These circumstances may here appear trivial, but it is surprising with what interest any visitor to the real scene will inquire into, and behold every part of it which can be associated, however remotely, with the poem of Tam o' Shanter. The churchyard contains several old monuments, of a very humble description, marking the resting-places of undistinguished persons who formerly lived in the neighbourhood, and probably had the usual hereditary title to little spaces of ground in this ancient cemetery. Among those persons rests William Burns, brother of the poet, over whose grave the son had piously raised a small stone, recording his name and the date of his death, together with the short poetical tribute to his memory which is copied in the works of the bard. But for this monument, long ago destroyed and carried away piece-

meal, there is now substituted one of somewhat finer proportions. But the churchyard of Alloway has now become fashionable with the dead as well as the living. Its little area is absolutely crowded with modern monuments, referring to persons, many of whom have been brought from considerable distances to take their rest in this doubly consecrated ground. Among these is one to the memory of a person named Tyrie, who, visiting the spot some years ago, happened to express a wish that he might be laid in Alloway churchyard, and, as fate would have it, was interred in the spot he had pointed out within a fortnight. Nor is this all; for even the neighbouring gentry are now contending for departments in this fold of the departed, and it is probable that the elegant mausolea of rank and wealth will soon be jostling with the stunted obelisks of humble worth and noteless poverty.

The Auld Brig of Doon, which is approached by a steep way forming Tam's line of march when pursued by the witches, and which is connected with the road by a sharp turn that may be conceived to have given that hero some trouble in a gallop, is a fine old arch of apparently very durable workmanship, and, though disused except for foot passengers, is kept in excellent order. Two or three years ago, the parapets had suffered considerable injury by many of the coping-stones being thrown into the water by idle boys; but at the instigation of Mr David Auld of Ayr, a poetical petition to the trustees was written by the Rev. Mr Paul of Broughton, author of a *Life of Burns*, with the view of obtaining the means of repairing it. On this document being presented to a meeting of the trustees at Ayr, it was found that they had no power to devote the public money to the repair of a disused road; but the eight or ten gentlemen present were so much amused by the petition, and, at the same time, so convinced by its arguments, that they subscribed on the spot a sum sufficient to put all to rights. The document is here subjoined in full form:—

"Unto the Honourable the Trustees of the Roads in the County of Ayr, the Petition and Complaint of the Auld Brig of Doon.

**"Must I, like modern fabrics of a day,
Decline, unwept, the victim of decay?
Shall my bold arch, that proudly stretches o'er
Doon's classic stream, from Kyle's to Carrick's shore,
Be suffered in oblivion's gulf to fall,
And hurl to wreck my venerable wall?
Forbid it! every tutelary power!
That guards my keystone at the midnight hour.
Forbid it, ye who, charm'd by Burns's lay,
Amid these scenes can linger out the day!
Let Nannie's sark, and Maggie's mangled tail,
Plead in my cause, and in that cause prevail.
The man of taste, who comes my form to see,
And curious asks, but asks in vain, for me,
With tears of sorrow will my fate deplore,
When he is told, 'The Auld Brig is no more.'
Stop then, O stop, the more than Vandal rage,
That marks this revolutionary age,
And bid the structure of your fathers last,
The pride of this, the boast of ages past;
Nor ever let your children's children tell,
By your decree the ancient fabric fell.**

"May it therefore please your Honours to consider this petition, and grant such sum as you may think proper for repairing and keeping up the Old Bridge of Doon.

(Signed) "———,
For the petitioner."

It may be appropriately mentioned at this place, that the original of 'Tam o' Shanter was an individual named Douglas Graham, a Carrick farmer. Shanter is a farm on the Carrick shore, near Kirkoswald, which Graham long possessed. The man was in sober, or rather drunken truth, the "bletherin', blusterin' blellum" that the poet has described; and his wife was as veritably a lady who most anxiously discouraged drinking in her husband. Burns, when a boy, spent some time at Kirkoswald, in the house of a maternal uncle, who at once practised the craft of a

millar and sold home-brewed ale. To this house Graham and his brother-in-law, the farmer of Duquhat (which lies between Kirkoswald and Shanter), used to resort; and finding in Burns some qualities which, boy as he was, recommended him to their attention, they made him every thing but their drinking companion. Sometimes the two toppers, tired of ale, which they said was rather cold for the stomach, would adjourn to Duquhat, and correct their native liquor with good brandy, which at that time was supplied by smugglers to every house in Carrick at a price next to nominal. Burns would accompany them in these migrations, an observant boy, inspecting the actions of his dotard seniors. After perhaps spending half a night at Duquhat, the farmer of that place, with Burns, would accompany Graham to Shanter; but as the idea of the "sulky sullen dame" rose in their minds, a debate would arise as to the propriety of venturing, even in full strength, into the house, and Graham, perhaps, would, after all, return to Duquhat, and continue the debauch till next day, content to put off the present evil even at the hazard of encountering it in an accumulated form afterwards. Such were the opportunities afforded to the poet of observing the life of the Carrick farmers of those days.

It is not easy, even for the actual writer of a fiction, to point out the skeleton ideas and incidents, the shadowy fragments of original and real life, which he has used in composing his work; and any task of this kind must of course be still more difficult in another party writing at the distance of a generation. Among the facts, however, which must have gone to the composition of "Tam o' Shanter," there is one, never yet noticed, which probably suggested the tail-piece, with which the diabolic panorama is concluded. Douglas Graham had, it seems, a good grey mare, which was very much identified with his own appearance. One day, being in Ayr, he tied the animal to a ring at the door of a public-house, where, contrary to his original intentions, he tarried so long that the boys,

in the meantime, plucked away the whole of his mare's tail, for the purpose of making fishing-lines. It was not till next morning, when he awoke from a protracted bouse, that the circumstance was discovered by his son, who came in, crying that the mare had lost her tail. Graham, when he comprehended the amount of the disaster, was, it seems, so much bewildered as to its cause, that he could only attribute it, after a round oath, to the agency of witches. There can be no doubt, we think, that this affair, working in Burns's recollection, was seized upon to serve as the catastrophe to a story of which the main part, it is well known, was a fireside legend, respecting a person of unknown name and character.

The Monument next demands attention. It was erected about ten years ago by subscription, and has only recently been surrounded in proper style by a garden of evergreens. • Hardly any object of the kind could be more truly beautiful or worthy of its purpose than this happily designed and happily situated building; nor could any thing be more truly entitled to praise than the manner in which it is kept and managed. The interior contains a capital copy of the original portrait of the poet, by Nasmyth, besides various other objects of less moment. In a grotto apart are now placed the celebrated statues of Tam o' Shanfer and Souter Johnny, executed by Mr James Thom, the self-taught sculptor. After performing the tour of the United Kingdom, and gathering a sum little short, we believe, of five thousand pounds, these singularly felicitous grotesques have been permanently fixed here, being in fact the property of the Monument Committee. The arrangements made for their permanent exhibition are in very good taste, and answer the purpose remarkably well.

It remains to be noticed, that a small but neat and remarkably well-managed inn has recently been erected in the neighbourhood of the monument, for the accommodation of the numerous pilgrims to the land of Burns. As the most fastidious travellers are thus assured of experiencing

no inconvenience in visiting the place, it may be safely anticipated that there will speedily be a large accession to the number of visitors. The windows of the principal room command views of all the classic objects which have been described. For the erection of this house, as well as much of the elegance and taste which is every where seen to preside over this endeared scene, the public is indebted to Mr David Auld, the same spirited individual who was the means of bringing forward the statues of Thom, and whose name must ever be identified with those admirable productions.

BANKS OF THE AYR.

The valley of the Ayr may be described as a large tract of open swelling country, extending from the county town, to which the river gives its name, and where it falls into the sea, to the uplands which divide Ayrshire from Clydesdale. The country has that striking peculiarity observable in the neighbourhood of the Esk at Roslin, and other rivers in Scotland: it is high and level, and preserves one uniform character every where, except on the immediate brink of the river, where in many places are found precipitous and rocky banks, as if the water had worn a chasm for itself, or been directed into one previously formed by some tremendous convulsion of nature. The deep sections of red sandstone thus exposed to the air, shagged with bushes growing from the fissures—the grand downward sweep of old woods which clothes the less rocky banks—the deep black pools of the hermit river, as he steals on pensively and obscurely to the sea—altogether form a tract of scenery which is hardly surpassed by any thing of the same kind in Scotland. Coilsfield, Barskimming, Auchinleck, Ballochmyle, and Catrine, are the names of gentlemen's parks which include the best parts of this fine range.

The principal road through this tract of country is that leading from Ayr to Mauchline, upon the north side of the river, and generally at some distance from its margin. It

was by this route that the present writer made his pilgrimage through the valley of the Ayr, and he will accordingly describe the objects he saw in the order in which they are presented to a person travelling in that direction.

Nothing of particular interest occurs for the first seven miles, when at length the pilgrim reaches the village of Tarbolton, so intimately connected with Burns's history. In the neighbourhood of this village is situated the farm of Lochlee, where the poet lived, as a humble denizen of his father's household, from the seventeenth to the twenty-fourth year of his age. This, of course, was the clachan to which at that period he resorted for the pleasures of society. He formed here, in 1780, a club of young men, who met monthly for mutual improvement and entertainment, and of which he and his brother poet David Sillar were the leading members; the utmost extent of expenditure on any night being threepence. Here, also, was a lodge of freemasons, which he delighted to attend, and to whom he wrote a farewell, incorporated in his poems. The lodge still exists, and possesses among its records many letters from Burns, some written long after he was locally dissevered from the association, and still breathing an intense interest in its concerns. It was after attending a meeting of this lodge that he wrote his poem entitled "Death and Dr Hornbook," the object of which was to burlesque the schoolmaster, who had offended him that night in the course of an argument. This individual had become attached to medicine, and having a small grocery shop, in which among other things he sold the more ordinary kinds of medicine, conceived himself qualified to accompany these with what he called "advice." The satire was nothing more at the time than an expression of the author's gall against a man who had ruffled him a little; and if it had never been published, the revenge could not have been said to have greatly exceeded the offence. On its being given, however, to the world, it produced effects which, considering the innocent, and perhaps even laud-

able nature of the schoolmaster's new vocation, must be deplored by every right-thinking person. It overwhelmed him with so much ridicule, that he found it necessary to leave the village, and seek in a more extended scene that obscurity which he could no longer enjoy in Tarbolton. He removed to Glasgow, and became a teacher in the Gorbals, where, it is pleasant to record, he prospered so well during a long course of years, as ultimately to realise a respectable competency. We have been informed by individuals who enjoy his acquaintance, that he is a truly virtuous and amiable man, totally the reverse of what might be presumed from the ungenerous sarcasms of the poet.

Tarbolton lies upon the banks of a small stream denominated Faile Water, and at no great distance may be traced the remains of that monastery to which the poet of the Reformation alludes in his well-known verse—

The friars of Faile ne'er wanted ale,
As long as their neebors' lasted ;
The monks of Melrose made gude kale
On Fridays when they fasted.

In pursuing its way to the Ayr, the Faile passes through the park of Coilsfield—a name which will awaken many recollections in association with Burns. Coilsfield was, in the days of Burns, the seat of Colonel Hugh Montgomery, a cadet of the house of Eglintoun, and who, in 1797, succeeded to that peerage, which his grandson now enjoys. The poet alludes to him, when he says—

—Could I like Montgomery fight,
Or gab like Boswell,
There's some sark-necks I wad draw tight,
And tie some hose well.

The house, which has since been renewed, stood upon a lofty bank overhanging the Faile, surrounded in every direction by the most beautiful woods. It is a scene which, in any circumstances, would arrest the eye of the passing traveller ; but it is needless to say that every other charm sinks beneath that which has been conferred upon it by the history and the genius of Burns.

It was one of the most remarkable gifts of this person, that he could invest any object he took a fancy for, however prosaic in the eyes of other people, with the most exalted interest. At the time of his residence near Mauchline, a girl named Mary Campbell, originally from Campbellton in Argyleshire, served at Coilsfield in the humble capacity of *byreswoman*, or dairymaid. She has been described to us by a surviving fellow-servant as a good-looking, middle-sized young woman, somewhat stout, neat footed, of a fair complexion, blue-eyed, and very slightly marked with small-pox. In the eyes of her compeers, she was simply what is called in Scotland a trig lass : in the eyes of Burns, she was an angel. Either before or after being at Coilsfield, she served a year in the house of Mr Gavin Hamilton, the poet's friend, at Mauchline ; and it is the tradition of that gentleman's family, that Burns's passion for her was the cause of her being discharged. According to the poet himself, after a pretty long trial of the most ardent reciprocal attachment, they met by appointment on the second Sunday of May, in a sequestered spot by the banks of the Ayr, where they spent a day in taking a farewell, before she should embark for the West Highlands, to arrange matters among her friends for her intended marriage to Burns. Probably the two lovers did not confine themselves to the Banks of the Ayr, but wandered through the woods of Coilsfield, and along the banks of the Faile ; for a spreading thorn is pointed out near the house as somehow connected with their story, either as a scene of meeting or of parting ; and the poet himself, in his poetical account of the transaction, addresses the scene at large :

Ye banks, and braes, and streams around
The castle o' Montgomerie ;
Green be your woods, and fair your flowers,
Your waters never drumlie.
There summer first unfaulds her robes,
And there they langest tarry.
For there I took my last farewell
Of my sweet Highland Mary.

How sweetly bloom'd the gay green birk,
 How rich the hawthorn's blossom,
 As, underneath the fragrant shade,
 I clasp'd her to my bosom !
 The angel hours, on golden wings,
 Flew o'er me and my dearie ;
 For dear to me, as light and life,
 Was my sweet Highland Mary.

Wi' mony a vow and lock'd embrace,
 Our parting was fu' tender,
 And, pledging aft to meet again,
 We tore ourselves asunder ;
 But oh ! fell death's untimely frost,
 That nipt my flower sae early !
 Now green's the sod and cauld's the clay,
 That wraps my Highland Mary.

O pale, pale now, those rosy lips,
 I aft hae kissed sae fondly ;
 And closed for aye the sparkling glance
 That dwelt on me sae kindly !
 And mouldering now in silent dust,
 The heart that lo'ed me dearly !
 But still within my bosom's core
 Shall live my Highland Mary.

According to another authority, the adieu of these lovers was performed with certain ceremonials, calculated to deepen the impression of even love itself. They stood on each side of a small brook—they laved their hands in the limpid stream—and holding a Bible between them, pronounced their vows to be faithful to each other. This Bible is or was lately in possession of a surviving sister of Mary, at Ardrassan. Upon the boards of the first volume is inscribed, in Burns's handwriting, "And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, I am the Lord."—*Levit.* chap. xix. v. 12. On the second volume—"Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shall perform unto the Lord thine oaths."—*St Matth.* chap. v. 33. And on a blank leaf of either—"Robert Burns, Mossiel," with his mason-mark.

The parting was an eternal one. On returning to Greenock, on her way to Ayrshire, Mary Campbell died

of an inflammatory distemper, and was buried in the church-yard there, where a monument, commemorating her story, was about ten years ago erected to her memory : her mother was then resident in Greenock.

What turn might have been given to the fate of Burns, if he had been united to this amiable though humble person, and thus redeemed in all probability from many subsequent follies, it were vain to speculate. It is to be supposed, however, that he often had occasion afterwards, when " musing on wasted time," and perhaps writhing under a consciousness that the tenor of his life was neither innocent nor profitable, to say with Serjeant Bothwell, in his most touching record of early and unfortunate passion,

Both heaven and earth might now approve me,
If thou hadst lived, and lived to love me.

Other attachments, including many less pure as well as less impassioned, afterwards possessed his breast ; but the recollection of " Mary" seems to have ever remained with him, and even to have recurred more particularly when the consequences of those less worthy attachments were pressing upon him. At the time when one of these was about to drive him into a degraded exile, he composed the following verses, which powerfully express the bitterness of his feelings on the occasion :—

O'er the mist-shrouded cliffs of the lone mountain straying,
Where the wild winds of winter incessantly rave,
What woes wring my heart while intensely surveying
The storm's gloomy path on the breast of the wave !

Ye foam-created billows, allow me to wail,
Ere ye toss me afar from my loved native shore ;
Where the flower which bloom'd sweetest in Coila's green vale,
The pride of my bosom, my Mary's no more.

No more by the banks of the streamlet we'll wander,
And smile at the moon's rippled face in the wave ;
No more shall my arms cling with fondness around her,
For the dewdrops of morning fall cold on her grave.

No more shall the soft thrill of love warm my breast ;
I haste with the storm to a far distant shore,
Where, unknown, unlamented, my ashes shall rest,
And joy shall revisit my bosom no more.*

To pursue this affecting tale in the words of Mr Lockhart—"That noblest of all his ballads, *To Mary in Heaven*, was, it is on all hands admitted, composed by Burns in September 1789 [at Ellisland], on the anniversary of the day on which he heard of the death of his early love. But Mr Cromek has thought fit to dress up the story with circumstances which did not occur. Mrs Burns, the only person who could appeal to personal recollection on this occasion, and whose recollections of all the circumstances connected with the history of her husband's poems are represented as being remarkably distinct and vivid, gives what may at first appear a more prosaic edition of the history. According to her, Burns spent that day, though labouring under a cold, in the usual work of his harvest, and apparently in excellent spirits. But as the twilight deepened, he appeared to grow 'very sad about something,' and at length wandered out into the barn-yard, to which his wife, in her anxiety for his health, followed him, entreating him in vain to observe that frost had set in, and to return to the fireside. On being again and again requested to do so, he always promised compliance, but still remained where he was, striding up and down slowly, and contemplating the sky, which was singularly clear and starry. At last Mrs Burns found him stretched on a mass of straw, with his eyes fixed on a beautiful planet, 'that shone like another moon,' and prevailed on him to come in. He immediately, on entering the house called for his desk, and wrote, exactly as they now stand, with all the ease of one copying from memory, the sublime and pathetic verses—

* First published in the *Edinburgh Literary Journal*, of November 21, 1829; being taken from a manuscript in the possession of Mr Lewis Smith, bookseller, Aberdeen.

Thou lingering star, with lessening ray,
 That lovest to greet the early morn,
 Again thou usher'st in the day
 My Mary from my soul was torn.
 O Mary! dear departed shade!
 Where is thy blissful place of rest?
 See'st thou thy lover lowly laid?
 Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?

That secret hour can I forget,
 Can I forget the hallow'd grove,
 Where by the winding Ayr we met,
 To live one day of parting love?
 Eternity will not efface
 Those records dear of transports past;
 Thy image at our last embrace;
 Ah! little thought we 'twas our last.

Ayr gurgling kiss'd his pebbled shore,
 O'erhung with wild woods thick'ning green:
 The fragrant birch, and hawthorn hoar,
 Twined amorous round the raptured scene.
 The flowers sprang wanton to be press'd,
 The birds sang love on every spray,
 Till too, too soon the glowing west
 Proclaim'd the speed of winged day.

Still o'er these scenes my mem'ry wakes,
 And fondly broods with miser care;
 Time but the impression deeper makes
 As streams their channels deeper wear.
 My Mary! dear departed shade!
 Where is thy blissful place of rest?
 See'st thou thy lover lowly laid?
 Hear'st thou the groans that rend his breast?"

To wander through these woods of Coilsfield, and reflect that, as the residence of rank and affluence, they are as nothing, but derive immortal glory from the attachment of a ploughman to a menial servant, both of whom lived forty years ago, fills the mind with reflections which we would vainly attempt to describe.*

* In a cottage amidst the Coilsfield woods lives Hugh Andrew, aged 73, who in Burns's days served Colonel Montgomery in the capacity of whipper-in. We conversed with this man, and obtained from him the above de-

From his twenty-fifth to his twenty-eighth year, Burns lived at the farm of Mossgiel, about three miles farther up the vale of the Ayr than Lochlee or Torbolton. Mauchline, from which Mossgiel is a mile distant, then became to him what Tarbolton had been before—the place where he chiefly enjoyed society, and whose inhabitants became the subjects of his muse. It is a parish-town of above a thousand inhabitants, in ancient times the seat of a priory belonging to Melrose, but now differing in no respect from a common agricultural village. It is situated upon a slope ascending from the margin of the Ayr, from which it is about two miles distant. One might at first suppose that a rustic population like that of Mauchline would form but a poor field for the descriptive and satirical genius of Burns. It is wonderful, however, how variously original many of the inhabitants of the most ordinary Scotch village will contrive to be. Human nature may be studied every where; and perhaps it nowhere assumes so many strikingly distinct forms as in a small cluster of men, such as is to be found in a town of a thousand inhabitants. In such a place, every individual luxuriates in his own particular direction, till the whole become as well individualised as the objects of inanimate nature; while in a city, the individual is lost in the mass, and no one is greatly different from another. In a small town the character of every man is well known, so that every thing he says or does appears to his fellows as characteristic. One is a wag, another is a miser, a third exaggerates all that he has to re-

scription of Highland Mary, which he was the more likely to give correct, as he "had ance a kind o' notion o' the lass himsel'." He remembers seeing Burns come one day, in his bluish-grey home-made clothes and blue rig-and-fur stockings, to be introduced to the lady of Colonel Montgomery. He was quite well known to Burns, having occasionally to act as a steward in the Tarbolton Lodge when the poet was president. Honest Hugh tells, that Burns had him in his eye in the verses of the Twa Dogs—

"Our whipper-in, wee blastit wonner,
 Puir worthless elf, it eats a dinner,
 Better than ony tenant man
 His honour has in a' the lan'."

The honour is not likely to be disputed.

late, a fourth delights (but this perhaps is little distinction) in strong waters. Every one is more or less a humorist, and, as such, affords a perpetual amusement to his contemporaries. If Shakspeare could draw lively delineations of human character from such persons as the originals of Silence and Shallow, it may well be conceived that a genius like Burns must have seen as good subjects in many of the villagers of Mauchline. To give an idea of the taste for wit and humour which might exist in such a scene as this, we may quote what was said by a shopkeeper named D—, when on his deathbed, in reference to a person who had been to him and all the other inhabitants as the very sun and soul of fun for many years, and was recently deceased: even in this melancholy condition, D— said he accounted it no small consolation to reflect, that he had lived in the same days with John Wear. The mind of the honest trader might no doubt have been filled with more fitting reflections at such a time; but it is impossible to doubt that it was from such escapes of national character that the very happiest touches of both Shakespeare and Burns were derived.

Mauchline was the scene of the poem entitled the Holy Fair, which, as is well known, describes the strange mixture of devotion and festivity that used to be observable at a country celebration of the communion in Scotland. The scene more immediately described was the preaching which took place in the churchyard, during the performance of the more solemn service within the house of worship. In front of a tent erected as a pulpit for the clergyman, sat a multitude of people, including many strangers,

—Some thinkin' on their sins,
And some upon their class—

as the satirical bard describes them. The parish church of Burns's time—a long, low, ungainly building—has recently been replaced by a smart Gothic edifice; but the rest of the scene is the same. The stranger still sees “the Cowgate,” through which Common Sense made his

escape, at the appearance of a particular clergyman on the preaching scene. [This, by the way, was not meant figuratively, but referred to the poet's friend Dr Mackenzie, who had corresponded with him under that assumed name.] He may also still see Nanse Tinnock's change-house, which used to fill, during the intervals of preaching, with "yill-caup commentators." This house adjoins to the churchyard, and has a back door leading into that area—so that it must have been particularly convenient for such of the congregation as desired a solacement of drink and victuals. Nanse is long deceased, and no one has caught up her mantle. She is described as having been a true *ale-wife*, in the proverbial sense of the word—close, discreet, civil, and no tale-teller. When any neighbouring wife came asking if *her John* was here, "Oh no," Nanse would reply, shaking money in her pocket as she spoke, "he's no here;" implying to the querist that the husband was not in the house, while she meant to herself that he was not among her halfpence—thus keeping the word of promise to the ear, but breaking it to the hope. Her house was one of two stories, and has a front towards the street, by which Burns must have entered Mauchline from Mossiel. The date over the door is 1744. It is remembered, however, that Nanse never could understand how the poet should have talked of enjoying himself in her house "nine times a-week." "The *lad*," she said, "hardly ever drank three half-mutchkins under her roof in his life." Nanse, probably, had never heard of the poetical licence. In truth, Nanse's hostelry was not the only one in Mauchline which Burns resorted to: a rather better-looking house, at the opening of the Cowgate, kept by a person named John Dove, and then and still bearing the arms of Sir John Whiteford of Ballochmyle, was also a haunt of the poet, having this high recommendation, that its back windows surveyed those of the house in which his "Jean" resided—now occupied by a druggist. The reader will recollect a droll epitaph on John Dove, in which the honest land-

lord's religion is made out to be a mere comparative appreciation of his various liquors.

The first person of respectable rank and good education who took any notice of Burns was Mr Gavin Hamilton, writer in Mauchline, from whom he took his farm of Moss-giel upon a sublease. Mr Hamilton lived in what is still called the Castle of Mauchline, namely, a half-fortified old mansion near the church, forming the only remains of the ancient priory. He was the son of a gentleman who had practised the same profession in the same place,* and was in every respect a most estimable member of society—generous, affable, and humane. Unfortunately his religious practice did not square with the notions of the then minister of Mauchline, the “Daddy Auld” of Burns's Poems, who, in 1785, is found in the session-records to have summoned him for rebuke, on the four following charges:—1. Unnecessary absence from church, for five consecutive Sundays (apparently the result of some dispute about a poor's rate); 2. Setting out on a journey to Carrick on a Sunday; 3. Habitual, if not total, neglect of family worship; 4. Writing an abusive letter to the session in reference to some of their former proceedings respecting him. Strange though this prosecution may seem, it was strictly accordant with the right assumed by clergymen at that period to inquire into the private habits of parishioners; and as it is universally allowed that Mr Auld's designs in the matter were purely religious, it is impossible to speak of it disrespectfully. It was unfortunately, however, mixed up with some personal motives in the members of the ses-

* Mr Lockhart, in his *Life of Burns*, both editions, has given a somewhat incorrect account of Mr Hamilton, his family, and the causes of his quarrel with the kirk-session of Mauchline. His father was a son of Hamilton of Kype in Lanarkshire, and it was only by his wife that he was in any way connected with the district of Carrick; she being a daughter of Kennedy of Daljerrock. It is related of the laird of Kype that he was once paying a visit to the Duke of Hamilton, when his grace inquired in what degree he was related to the ducal house, and whereabouts in the family tree the race of Kype was to be found. “It would be needless to seek the root among the branches,” answered the haughty laird, who perhaps had some pretensions to be of the principal stock of the Hamiltons, or knew at least that the claims of the ducal house to the chiefship were by no means clear.

sion, which were so apparent to the Presbytery, to which Mr Hamilton appealed, that that reverend body ordered the proceedings to be stopped, and all notice of them expunged from the records. Prepossessions of more kinds than one induced Burns to let loose his irreverent muse and satire against the persecutors of Mr Hamilton ; and the result was several poems, in which it is but too apparent that religion itself suffers in common with those whom he holds up as abusing it. About two years after, when Burns had commenced the Edinburgh chapter of his life, a new offence was committed by Mr Hamilton. He had, on a Sunday morning, ordered a servant to take in some potatoes which happened to have been left out in the garden after being dug. This came to the ears of the minister, and Mr Hamilton was summoned to answer for the offence. Some ludicrous details occur in the session-records. It is there alleged that two and a half rows of potatoes were dug on the morning in question, by Mr Hamilton's express order, and carried home by his daughter; nay, so keen had the spirit of persecution been, that the rows had been formally measured, and found to be each eleven feet long; so that twenty-seven feet and a half altogether had been dug. The Presbytery or Synod treated this prosecution in the same way as the former, and Burns did not overlook it in his poems. He alludes to it in Holy Willie's Prayer, when he makes that individual implore a curse upon Mr Hamilton's

——— basket and his store,

Kail and *potatoes*—

and on several other occasions.

In Mr Hamilton's house, which is occupied by his son, Mr Alexander Hamilton, in the same line of business, is shown the room in which Burns composed the satirical poem entitled the Calf. He had called upon Mr Hamilton on his way to church, and being desired by that gentleman to bring home a note of the text, produced on his return

those clever but certainly over-severe and wicked verses. Mr Hamilton's writing-room had then a back door leading to the church. By this way Burns entered, and finding Mrs Hamilton writing a note at her husband's business-desk, requested a pen, and, sitting down on the other side, scribbled in a few minutes one of the most bitter *jeux d'esprits* he ever penned. This room is farther remarkable as the one in which the poet was married, that ceremony being rather of a legal than of a religious complexion. From the session-record, it would appear that the ceremony took place on the 3d of August 1788, and that Mr Burns, being informed that in irregular marriages it was customary for the bridegroom to pay a small fine to the poor of the parish, gave a guinea for this purpose.

Mossgiel, or Mossgavel, as already mentioned, is about a mile from Mauchline. It is a very plain *farm-steading*, of the kind described in Ramsay's Gentle Shepherd—

A snug thack house, before the door a green ;
Hens on the midden, ducks in dubs are seen ;
On this side stands a barn, on that a byre ;
A peat-stalk joins, and forms a rural square—

except that the buildings are not thatched. Being situated at the height of the country between the vales of Ayr and Irvine, it has a peculiarly bleak and exposed appearance, which is but imperfectly obviated by a very tall hedge and some well-grown trees, which gather around it, and beneath one of which the poet is said to have loved to recline. The domestic accommodations consist of little more than a butt and a ben—that is, a kitchen and a small room. The latter, though in every respect most humble, and partly occupied by fixed beds, does not appear uncomfortable. Every consideration, however, in the mind of the visitor, sinks beneath the one intense feeling that here, within these four walls, warmed at this little fireplace, and lighted by this little window, lived one of the most extraordinary men that ever breathed—here wrote some of the most celebrated poems of modern times. The place has

one touching recollection above all others—that it was the scene described in the opening of his beautiful “Vision.”

There lanely, by the ingle-cheek,
I sat and eyed the spewing reek.

All in this mottie misty clime
I backward mused on wasted time,
How I had spent my youthfu' prime,
And done nae-thing,
But stringing blathers up in rhyme,
For fools to sing—&c.

The house is in every respect exactly in the same condition as when the poet lived in it. It was occupied by his brother Gilbert down to the year 1800, and since then has had but one tenant, the individual who now occupies it. It may be mentioned that a part of the farm bears the title of Knockhaspie's Lands, which, it will be recollected, he alludes to in one of his songs—

I wad gi'e a' Knockhaspie's lands
For Highland Harry back again.

We must now take a glance at the romantic scenery of the Ayr, to which allusion has so frequently been made. The beautiful grounds around Barskimming House are the first in order after Coilsfield; this, in Burns's time, was the seat of Lord Justice Clerk Miller, and now of his son Lord Glenlee. It is alluded to by the poet in the Vision—

Through many a wild romantic grove,
Near many a hermit-fancied cove,
(Fit haunts for friendship or for love,
In musing mood),
An aged judge, I saw him rove,
Dispensing good.

The river passes through this lovely park by a chasm in general upwards of a hundred feet deep, and the sides of which are almost every where as steep as the walls of a house. Here and there is seen a profound section of rock, perforated in some places by what Burns aptly terms her-

mit-fancied coves, and in all cases whiskered by the most luxuriant foliage. There is a bridge near the house, where the scenery is enjoyed in high perfection. Both upwards and downwards, nothing is to be seen but tremendous banks of wood, or great scalped rocks, beneath which the river passes moodily onward, dark as Cocytus, except where mottled with the foam of a recent conflict with some rude opposing crag.

Farther up the river is Kinzeancleuch, now a place of no note, but which will not be passed by any one interested in the history of our national church, without some pleasing and respectful reminiscences. Campbell of Kinzeancleuch was one of the first of the Scottish barons who espoused the Reformation—was the steady friend and protector of Knox—and was present at his death. The Reformer himself was oftener than once sheltered at Kinzeancleuch House. It is remarkable that Burns appears to have either been acquainted with no part of Scottish history except that of Wallace and Bruce, or to have had no sympathies for any other portion of it. At Mauchline there is a martyr's stone, to which he has never made the least allusion.

Immediately above Kinzeancleuch, commence the Braes of Ballochmyle, which he has commemorated in one of the most glowing of all his amatory songs. Ballochmyle was formerly the property of Sir John Whiteford, representative of the gentleman whose story supplied the groundwork of the novel of Waverley, but in Burns's time was purchased by a mercantile family named Alexander, connected with Glasgow. The scenery is much the same as that of Barskimming, except that the banks of the river are softer, and break into fine dens and glades, which are comparatively unknown farther down the stream. Amidst these romantic groves, Burns was wandering on a summer evening, when he passed a young lady, daughter to the new proprietor, with whose charms he was greatly struck. The result was his beautiful song, entitled "The Bonny

Lass of Ballochmyle," which he sent to her, enclosed in a very respectful letter. To his great mortification, no notice was taken of the communication. The young lady in all probability felt more resentment at the freedom, than pleasure from the compliment. However this may be, it is certain that, in subsequent years, when the fame of the bard overspread many lands, Miss Alexander began to appreciate the poem more than she had done. In some revolutions of the family household, when she was about to remove to Glasgow, it became a question whether the original of that document belonged to the family, and should remain at Ballochmyle. "That," said she emphatically, "is with me a settled point : wherever I go, the poem shall go with me." She permitted a copy, however, to be taken by the apograph of a neighbouring artist,* on wood ; which is fixed into the back of a moss-house amidst the braes of Ballochmyle. The lady is still alive, and unmarried.

TOP BOOTS.

TOP BOOTS, as every body must have remarked, are now nearly altogether out of fashion. Their race is all but extinct. An occasional pair may indeed still be seen encasing the brawny legs of a stout elderly country gentleman, on a market day, or on the occasion of a flying visit to the metropolis ; but with this exception, and with probably that of some hale obstinate bachelor octogenarian, who, in

* This artist is Mr Andrew Smith, of W. and A. Smith, Mauchline ; one of those ingenious individuals who are sometimes found in the most retired and rustic situations. Mr Smith is the inventor of the instrument above alluded to, one calculated to be eminently useful in taking fac-similes of any piece of writing, or other work consisting of lines, and that in any degree of amplification or reduction. In company with his brother, he conducts a manufactory of wooden snuff-boxes, upon a considerable scale, about sixty people being employed ; and the quantity of ingenious machinery which he has brought to bear upon this humble but curious and even elegant manufacture, is such as would impress any stranger with surprise.

full recollection of the impression which his top boots had made on the public mind some fifty years since, still persists in thrusting his shrivelled shanks into the boots of his youth—we say, with the first positive, and the last probable exception, this highly respectable-looking and somewhat flashy article of dress has entirely disappeared.

Time was, however, and we recollect it well, when matters stood far otherwise with top boots. We have a distinct vision of numberless pairs flitting before our eyes, through the mazes of the various thoroughfares of the city; but, alas! they have evanished, one after another, like stars before the light of approaching day. Rest to their *soles*, they are now gathered to their fathers, their brightness is extinguished, their glory is gone. The Conqueror of Waterloo hath conquered them also: the top boots have fallen before the Wellingtons.

We have said, that we recollect when it was otherwise with top boots, and so we do. We recollect when a pair of top boots was a great object of ambition with the young, whose worldly prosperity was all yet to come, whose means of indulging in such little vanities of the flesh were yet to be acquired. To them a pair of top boots was a sort of landmark in the voyage of life; a palpable, prominent, and desirable object to be attained; a sort of Cape Horn to be doubled. Nor were they less objects of ambition at the time we speak of—say about forty years since—to the more advanced, whose circumstances required a long previous hint to prepare for such an event as the purchase of a pair of top boots. In short, top boots were the rage of the day. The apprentice, the moment he got *out* of his time, got *into* his top boots. The first thing the young grocer did was to get a pair of top boots. No lover then went to woo his mistress but in top boots, or at least if he did, the chance was, that he would go to very little purpose. The buckishly-inclined mechanic, too, hoarded his superfluous earnings until they reached the height of a pair of top boots, in which to entomb his lower limbs. Al-

though their visits now, as we have already hinted, are "few and far between," we have seen the day when, instead of being but occasionally seen, like solitary points of light as they are now, on the dusty street, they converted it by their numbers into an absolute *via lactea*—a perfect galaxy of white leather—or shot, frequent, pale, lacteous, and flitting, like northern streamers, through the dark tide of humanity as it rolled along. No marvel it is, then, that, in the midst of the wide prevalence of this top boot epidemic, poor Tommy Aikin should have fallen a victim to the disease—that his heart should have been set upon a pair of top boots; nor is it a marvel that Mr Aikin should have been able finally to gratify this longing of his, seeing that he was in tolerable circumstances, or at least in such circumstances as enabled him, by retrenching a little somewhere else, to attain the great object of his ambition—a pair of top boots. No marvel, then, as we have said, are these things which we have related of Mr Aikin; but great marvel is it that a pair of top boots should have wrought any man such mischief, as we shall presently show they did, to that honest man. But let us not anticipate. Let us, as has been before wisely said, begin at the beginning, and say who Mr Aikin was, and what were the evils in which his top boots involved him. Be it known, then, to all whom it may concern, that Mr Thomas Aikin was an officer of Excise, and was, at the period to which our story relates, residing in a certain small town not more than fifty miles distant from the city of Glasgow. Mr Aikin was a stout-made middle-aged man, exceedingly good-natured, kind, civil, and obliging. In short, he was an excellent fellow, honest and upright in all his dealings, and a faithful servant of the Revenue. Every body liked Mr Aikin, and Mr Aikin liked every body; and sorely did every body lament his misfortunes when they fell upon him. Mr Aikin had for many years led a happy life in the bosom of his family. He laughed and joked away, took his jug of toddy, caressed his children, spoke always affectionately to and

of his wife, and was so spoken to and of by her in return. In short, Mr Aikin was a happy man up to that evil hour when he conceived the idea of possessing himself of a pair of top boots.

"Mary," said Mr Aikin, one luckless evening, to his loving wife, after having sat for about half an hour looking into the fire.

"Aweel, Thomas?" said his spouse, in token of her attention.

"I wad like to hae a pair o' tap boots," replied Mr Aikin, shortly, and without further preamble, although he had in reality bestowed a good deal of thought on the subject previously; indeed, a dim undefined vision of top boots had been floating before his mind's eye for nearly a month before it took the distinct shape of such a determination as he was now about to express.

"Aweel, Thomas," replied his better half, with equal brevity, "ye had better get a pair."

"They're decent-lookin' things," rejoined Mr Aikin.

"Indeed are they," said his indulgent spouse, "very decent and respectable, Thomas."

"Rather flashy though, I doubt, for the like o' me," quoth Mr Aikin.

"I dinna see that, Thomas, sae lang as ye're able to pay for them," remarked Mrs Aikin.

"No so very able, my dear," responded her husband; "but I wad like to hae a pair for a' that, just to wear on Sundays and collection days."

"Aweel, Thomas, get them; and what for no?" replied Mrs Aikin, "since your mind's bent on them. We'll save the price o' them aff something else."

We need not pursue farther the amiable colloquy which took place on this fatal night between Mr Aikin and his wife. Suffice it to say, that that night fixed Mr Aikin's resolution to order a pair of top boots. On the very next day he was measured for the said boots; and late on the Saturday evening following, the boots, with their tops

carefully papered, to protect them from injury, were regularly delivered by an apprentice boy into the hands of Mrs Aikin herself, for her husband's interest.

As Mr Aikin was not himself in the house when the boots were brought home, they were placed in a corner of the parlour to await his pleasure; and certainly nothing could look more harmless or more inoffensive than did these treacherous boots, as they now stood, with their muffled tops and shining feet, in the corner of Mr Aikin's parlour. But alas! alas! short-sighted mortals that we are! that could not foresee any the slightest portion of the evils with which these rascally boots were fraught. To shorten our story as much as possible, we proceed to say that Mr Aikin at length came home, and being directed to where the boots lay, he raised them up in one hand, holding a candle in the other; and having turned them round and round several times, admiring their gloss and fair proportions, laid them down again with a calm quiet smile of satisfaction, and retired to bed. Sunday came; the church bells rang, and Mr Aikin sallied forth, in all the pomp and glory of a pair of spick and span new top boots. With all Mr Aikin's good qualities, there was, however, and we forgot to mention it before, a *leetle* touch of personal vanity; the slightest imaginable it was, but still such an ingredient did enter into the composition of his character, and it was this weakness, as philosophers call it, which made him hold his head at an unwonted height, and throw out his legs with a flourish, and plant his foot with a firmness and decision on this particular Sunday, which was quite unusual with him, or, at least, which had passed unnoticed before. With the exception, however, of a few passing remarks, in which there was neither much acrimony nor much novelty, Mr Aikin's boots were allowed to go to and from the church in peace and quietness. "Hae ye seen Mr Aikin's tap boots?" "Faith, Mr Aikin looks weel in his tap boots." "Mr Aikin was unco grand the day in his tap boots." Such and such like were the only observa-

tions which Mr Aikin's top boots elicited on the first Sunday of their appearance. Sunday after Sunday came and departed, and with the Sundays came also and departed Mr Aikin's top boots, for he wore them only on that sacred day, and on collection days, as he himself originally proposed. Like every other marvel, they at length sunk quietly to rest, becoming so associated and identified with the wearer, that no one ever thought of discussing them separately. Deceitful calm, treacherous silence—it was but the gathering of the storm. It so happened that Mr Aikin, in the language of the Excise, surveyed, that is, ascertained and levied the duties payable by a tanner, or leather-dresser, who carried on his business in the town in which Mr Aikin resided. Now, the Honourable Board of Excise were in those days extremely jealous of the fidelity of their officers, and, in a spirit of suspicion of the honour and faith of man peculiar to themselves, readily listened to every report prejudicial to the character of their servants. Here, then, was an apparently intimate connection, and of the worst sort—a pair of top boots—between a revenue officer and a trader, a dresser of leather. Remote and obscure hints of connivance between the former and the latter began to arise, and in despite of the general esteem in which Mr Aikin was held, and the high opinion which was entertained of his worth and integrity, these hints and suspicions—such is the wickedness and perversity of human nature—gradually gained ground, until they at length reached the ears of the Board, with the most absurd aggravations.

Their honours were told, but by whom was never ascertained, that the most nefarious practices were going on in —, and to an enormous extent. Large speculations in contraband leather, on the joint account of the officer and trader, were talked of; the one sinking his capital, the other sacrificing the king's duties. Whole hogsheads of manufactured boots and shoes were said to be exported to the West Indies, as the common adventure of the officer

and trader. The whole family and friends of the former, to the tenth degree of propinquity, were said to have been supplied gratis with boots and shoes for the last ten years. In short, the whole affair was laid before their honours the Commissioners of Excise, decked out in the blackest colours, and so swollen, distorted, and exaggerated, that no man could have conceived for a moment that so monstrous a tale of dishonesty and turpitude could have been manufactured out of a thing so simple as a pair of top boots. Indeed, how could he?—for the boots, the real ground of the vile fabrication, were never once mentioned, nor in the slightest degree alluded to; but, as it was, the thing bore a serious aspect, and so thought the Honourable Board of Excise. A long and grave consultation was held in the board-room, and the result was, an order to the then collector of Excise in Glasgow to make a strict and immediate inquiry into the circumstances of the case, and to report thereon; a measure which was followed up in a day or two afterwards, by their honours dispatching two Surveying-generals, as they are called, also to Glasgow, to assist at and superintend the investigation which the Collector had been directed to set on foot. On the arrival of these officers at Glasgow, they forthwith waited upon the Collector, to ascertain what he had learnt regarding Mr Aikin's nefarious practices. The result of the consultation which was here again held, was a determination, on the part of the Generals and the Collector, to proceed to the scene of Mr Aikin's ignominy, and to prosecute their inquiries on the spot, as the most likely way of arriving at a due knowledge of the facts. Accordingly, two chaises were hired at the expense of the crown, one for the two Generals, and another for the Collector and his clerk:—all this, good reader, be it remembered, arising from the simple circumstance of Mr Aikin's having indulged himself in the luxury of a single solitary pair of top boots, and, moreover, the first pair he ever had. The gentlemen having seated themselves in the carriages, were joined, just before start-

ing, by a friend of the Collector's on horseback, who, agreeably to an arrangement he had made with the latter on the preceding day, now came to ride out with them to the scene of their impending labours ; and thus, though of course he had nothing to do with the proceedings of the day, he added not a little to the imposing character of the procession, which was now about to move in the direction of Mr Aikin's top boots. An hour and a half's drive brought the whole cavalcade into the little town in which the unfortunate owner of the said boots resided ; and little did he think, honest man, as he eyed the procession passing his windows, marvelling the while what it could mean—little, we say, did he think that the sole and only object, *pro tempore* at least, of those who composed it, was to inquire how, and by what means, and from whom, he had gotten his top boots. Of this fact, however, he was soon made aware. In less than half an hour he was sent for, and told, for the first time, of the heavy charges which lay against him. A long, tedious investigation took place ; item after item of poor Aikin's indictment melted away beneath the process of inquiry ; until at length the whole affair resolved itself into the original cause of all the mischief, the pair of top boots. Nothing which could in the slightest degree impugn Mr Aikin's honesty remained, but these unlucky top boots, and for them he immediately produced his shoemaker's receipt. " Mr Aikin—bought of David Anderson, one pair of top boots, L.2, 2s. Settled in full, D. Anderson." With this finisher the investigation closed, and Mr Aikin stood fully and honourably acquitted of all the charges brought against him. The impression, however, which the affair made at head-quarters, was far from being favourable to him. He was ever after considered there in the light, not of an innocent man, but as one against whom nothing could be proven ; and his motions were watched with the utmost vigilance. The consequence was, that, in less than three months, he was dismissed from the service of the Revenue, ostensibly for some trifling

ing omission of duty ; but he himself thought, and so did every body else, that the top boots were in reality the cause of his misfortune.

One would have thought that this was quite enough of mischief to arise from one pair of top boots, and so thought every body but the top boots themselves, we suppose. This was but a beginning of the misfortunes into which they walked with their unfortunate owner.

About four miles distant from the town in which Mr Aikin lived, there resided an extensive coal-mine proprietor, of the name of Davidson ; and it so happened that he, too, had a predilection for that particular article of dress, already so often named, viz. top boots ; indeed he was never known to wear any thing else in their place. Davidson was an elderly gentleman, harsh and haughty in his manner, and extremely mean in all his dealings—a manner and disposition which made him greatly disliked by the whole country, and especially by his workmen, the miners, of whom he employed upwards of a hundred and fifty. The abhorrence in which Mr Davidson was at all times held by his servants, was at this particular moment greatly increased by an attempt which he was making to reduce his workmen's wages ; and to such a height had their resentment risen against their employer, that some of the more ferocious of them were heard to throw out dark hints of personal violence ; and it was much feared by Davidson's friends—of whom he had, however, but a very few, and these mostly connected with him by motives of interest—that such an occurrence would in reality happen one night or other, and that at no great distance of time. Nor was this fear groundless. Mr Davidson was invited to dine with a neighbouring gentleman. He accepted the invitation, very foolishly, as his family thought ; but he did accept it, and went accordingly. It was in the winter time, and the house of his host was about a mile distant from his own residence. Such an opportunity as this of giving their employer a sound drubbing had been long looked for by some half

dozen of Mr Davidson's workmen, and early and correct information on the subject of his dining out enabled them to avail themselves of it. The conspirators having held a consultation, resolved to waylay Davidson on his return home. With this view they proceeded, after it became dark, in the direction of the house in which their employer was dining. Having gone about half way, they halted, and held another consultation, whereat it was determined that they should conceal themselves in a sunk fence which ran alongside of the road, until the object of their resentment approached, when they should all rush out upon him at once, and belabour him to their hearts' content. This settled, they all cowered down into the ditch, to await the arrival of their victim. "But how will we ken him i' the dark?" said Jock Tamson, one of the conspirators, in a low whisper, to his next neighbour; "we may fa' foul o' somebody else in a mistak." The question rather pozed Jock's neighbour, who immediately put it to the person next him, and he again to the next, and on went the important query, until all were in possession of it; but none could answer it. At length, one of more happy device than the rest suggested that Mr Davidson might be recognised by his top boots. The idea pleased all, and was by all considered infallible, for the fame of Mr Aikin's boots had not yet reached this particular quarter of the country. Satisfied that they had hit upon an unerring mark by which to know their man, the ruffians waited patiently for his approach. At length, after fully two hours' watching, the fall of a foot-step broke faintly on their ears; it came nearer and nearer, and became every moment more and more distinct. Breathless with the intensity of their feelings, the conspirators, in dead silence, grasped their cudgels with increased energy, and sunk themselves in the ditch until their eyes were on a level with the ground, that they might at once place the approaching object full before them, and between them and the feeble light which lingered in the western sky. In the meantime, the wayfarer approached; two dim whitey

objects glimmered indistinctly in the darkness. They were instantly recognised to be Mr Davidson's top boots ; a loud shout followed this feeling of conviction ; the colliers rushed from their hiding-place, and in the next instant half a dozen bludgeons whistled round the ears of the unfortunate wayfarer. The sufferer roared lustily for mercy, but he roared in vain. The blows fell thick and fast upon his luckless head and shoulders, for it was necessary that the work should be done quickly ; and a few seconds more saw him lying senseless and bleeding in the ditch in which his assailants had concealed themselves. Having satisfied their vengeance, the ruffians now fled, leaving their victim behind them in the condition we have just described. Morning came—a man was found in a ditch, speechless, and bleeding profusely from several severe wounds on the head and face. He was dragged out, and, after cleansing his face from the blood and dirt with which it was encrusted, the unfortunate man was recognised to be—Mr Thomas Aikin !

The cursed boots, and they alone, were the cause of poor Aikin's mischance. He had, indeed, been mauled by mistake, as the reader will have already anticipated. There was no intention whatever on the part of the colliers to do Mr Aikin any injury, for Mr Aikin in the whole course of his harmless life had never done them any ; indeed, he was wholly unknown to them, and they to him. It was the top boots, and nothing but the top boots, that did all the mischief. But to go on with our story. Aikin was carried home, and through the strength of a naturally good constitution and skilful surgical assistance, recovered so far in six weeks as to be able to go about as usual, although he bore to his grave with him on his face the marks of the violence which he had received, besides being disfigured by the loss of some half dozen of his front teeth.

The top boots, which poor Aikin had worn before as articles of dress, and of course as a matter of choice, he was now obliged to wear daily from necessity, being, as we

have already related, dismissed from his situation in the Excise. One would think that Aikin had now suffered enough for his predilection for top boots, seeing, at least so far as we can see, that there was no great harm in such an apparently inoffensive indulgence; but Mr Aikin's evil stars, or his top boots themselves, we do not know which, were of a totally different opinion, and on this opinion they forthwith proceeded to act.

Some weeks after the occurrence of the disaster just recorded, the little town of —, where Aikin resided, was suddenly thrown into a state of the utmost horror and consternation, by the report of a foul murder and robbery having been committed on the highway, and within a short distance of the town; and of all the inhabitants who felt horror-struck on this occasion, there was no one more horrified than Mr Thomas Aikin. The report, however, of the murder and robbery, was incorrect, in so far as the unfortunate man was still living, although little more, when found in the morning, for the deed had been committed over night. Being a stranger, he was immediately conveyed to the principal inn of the town, put to bed, and medical aid called in. The Fiscal, on learning that the man was still in existence, instantly summoned his clerk, and, accompanied by a magistrate, hastened to the dying man's bedside, to take down whatever particulars could be learnt from him regarding the assault and robbery. After patiently and laboriously connecting the half intelligible and disjointed sentences which they from time to time elicited from him, they made out that he was a cattle-dealer, that he belonged to Edinburgh, that he had been in Glasgow, and that, having missed the evening coach which plies between the former and the latter city, he had taken the road on foot, with the view of accomplishing one stage, and there awaiting the coming up of the next coach. They further elicited from him that he had had a large sum of money upon him, of which, of course, he had been deprived. The Fiscal next proceeded to inquire if he could identify the

person or persons who attacked him. He mumbled a reply in the negative.

"How many were there of them?" inquired the Magistrate; "was there more than one?"

"Only one," muttered the unfortunate man.

"Was there any peculiarity in his dress or appearance that struck you?" asked the Fiscal.

He mumbled a reply, but none of the bystanders could make it out. The question was again put, and both the Magistrate and Fiscal stooped down simultaneously to catch the answer. After an interval it came—and what think you it was, good reader? Why, "top boots," distinctly and unequivocally. The Fiscal and Magistrate looked at each other for a second, but neither durst venture to hint at the astounding suspicion which the mention of these remarkable objects forced upon them.

"He wore top boots, you say?" again inquired the Fiscal, to make sure that he had heard aright.

"Y-e-s, t-o-p b-o-o-t-s," was again the reply.

"Was he a thin man or a stout man?"

"A stout man."

"Young or middle-aged?"

"Middle-aged."

"Tall or short?"

"Short," groaned out the sufferer, and with that word the breath of life departed from him.

This event of course put an immediate end to the inquiry. The Fiscal and Magistrate now retired to consult together regarding what was best to be done, and to reconsider the deposition of the murdered man. There was a certain pair of top boots present to the minds of both, but the wearer of them had hitherto borne an unblemished character, and was personally known to them both as a kind-hearted, inoffensive man. Indeed, up to this hour they would as soon have believed that the minister of the parish would commit a robbery as Mr Aikin—we say Mr Aikin, for we can no longer conceal the fact that it was

Aikin's boots, however reluctantly admitted, that flashed upon the minds of the two gentlemen of whom we are now speaking.

"The thing is impossible, incredible, of such a man as Mr Aikin," said the Magistrate, in reply to the first open insinuation of the Fiscal, although, in saying this, he said what was not in strict accordance with certain vague suspicions which had taken possession of his own mind.

"Why, I should say so too," replied the officer of the law, "were I to judge by the character which he has hitherto borne; but here," he said, holding up the deposition of the murdered man, "here are circumstances which we cannot be warranted in overlooking, let them implicate whom they may. There is in especial the top boots," went on the Fiscal; "now, there is not another pair within ten miles of us but Aikin's; for Mr Davidson, the only man whom I know that wears them besides, is now in London. There is the personal description, too, exact. And besides all this, Bailie," continued the law officer, "you will recollect that Mr Aikin is, and has been out of employment for the last six months; and there is no saying what a man who has a large family upon his hands will do in these circumstances."

The Bailie acknowledged the force of his colleague's observations, but remarked, that, as it was a serious charge, it must be gone cautiously and warily about. "For it wad be," he said, "rather a hard matter to hang a man upon nae ither evidence than a pair o' tap boots."

"Doubtless it would," replied the Fiscal; "but here is," he said, "a concatenation of circumstances—a chain of evidence, so far as it goes, perfectly entire and connected. But," he continued, as if to reconcile the Bailie to the dangerous suspicion, "an alibi on the part o' Mr Aikin will set a' to rights, and blaw the hail charge awa like peelings o' ingans; and if he be an innocent man, Bailie, he can hae nae difficulty in establishing an alibi."

Not so fast, Mr Fiscal, not so fast, if you please; this

alibi was not so easily established, or rather it could not be established at all. Most unfortunately for poor Aikin, it turned out, upon an inquiry which the official authorities thought it necessary to set on foot before proceeding to extremities, that is, before taking any decisive steps against the object of their suspicion, that he had been not only absent from his own house until a late hour of the night on which the murder and robbery was committed, but had actually been at that late hour on the very identical road on which it had taken place. The truth is, that Aikin had been dining with a friend who lived about a mile into the country, and, as it unfortunately happened, in the very direction in which the crime had been perpetrated; still could it not have been shown that no unnecessary time had elapsed between the moment of his leaving his friend's house and his arrival at his own. Such a circumstance would surely have weighed something in his favour. So it would, probably; but, alas! even this slender exculpatory incident could not be urged in his behalf; for the poor man, little dreaming of what was to happen, had drunk a tumbler or two more than enough, and had fallen asleep on the road. In short, the Fiscal, considering all the circumstances of the case as they now stood, did not think it consistent with his duty either to delay proceedings longer against Aikin, or to maintain any further delicacy with regard to him. A report of the whole affair was made to the Sheriff of Glasgow, who immediately ordered a warrant to be made out for the apprehension of Aikin. This instrument was given forthwith into the custody of two criminal officers, who set out directly in a post-chaise to execute their commission. Arriving in the middle of the night, they found poor Aikin, wholly unconscious of the situation in which he stood, in bed and sound asleep. Having roused the unhappy man, and barely allowed him time to draw on his top boots, they hurried him into the chaise, and in little more than an hour thereafter, Aikin was fairly lodged in Glasgow Jail, to stand his trial for

murder and robbery, and this mainly, if not wholly, on the strength of his top boots. The day of trial came. The judge summed up the evidence, and, in an eloquent speech, directed the special attention of the jury to Aikin's top boots ; indeed, on these he dwelt so much, and with such effect, that the jury returned a verdict of guilty against the prisoner at the bar, who accordingly received sentence of death, but was strongly recommended to mercy by the jury, as well on the ground of his previous good character, as on that of certain misgivings regarding the top boots, which a number of the jury could not help entertaining, in despite of their prominence in the evidence which was led against their unfortunate owner. Aikin's friends, who could not be persuaded of his guilt, notwithstanding the strong circumstantial proof with which it was apparently established, availing themselves of this recommendation of the jury, immediately set to work to second the humane interference ; and Providence in its mercy kindly assisted them. From a communication which the Superintendent of Police in Glasgow received from the corresponding officer in Edinburgh about a week after Aikin's condemnation, it appeared that there were more gentlemen of suspicious character in the world who wore top boots than poor Aikin. The letter alluded to announced the capture of a notorious character, regarding whom information had been received from Bow Street—a flash cove, fresh from London, on a foraying expedition in Scotland. The communication described him as being remarkably well dressed, and, in especial, alluded to the circumstance of his wearing top boots ; concluding the whole, which was indeed the principal purpose of the letter, by inquiring if there was any charge in Glasgow against such a person as they described. The circumstance, by some fortunate chance, reached the ears of Aikin's friends, and in the hope that something might be made of it, they employed an eminent lawyer in Edinburgh to sift the matter to the bottom. In the meantime, the Englishman in the top boots was brought

to trial for another highway robbery, found guilty, and sentenced to death without hope of mercy. The lawyer whom Aikin's friends had employed, thinking this a favourable opportunity for eliciting the truth from him, seeing that he had now nothing more to fear in this world, waited upon the unfortunate man, and, amidst a confession of a long series of crimes, obtained from him that of the murder and robbery for which Aikin had been tried and condemned. The consequence of this important discovery was the immediate liberation of Aikin, who again returned in peace to the bosom of his family. His friends, however, not contented with what they had done, represented the whole circumstances of the case to the Secretary of State for the Home Department; and under the impression that there lay a claim on the country for reparation for the injury, though inadvertent, which its laws had done to an innocent man, the application was replied to in favourable terms in course of post, and in less than three weeks thereafter, Mr Thomas Aikin was appointed to a situation in the Custom-house in London, worth two hundred pounds a-year. His steadiness, integrity, and general good conduct, soon procured him still farther advancement; and he finally died, after enjoying his appointment for many years, in the annual receipt of more than double the sum which we have just named. And thus ends the eventful history of Mr THOMAS AIKIN and his Top Boots.

MY GRAVE!

Far from the city's ceaseless hum,
Hither let my relics come;
Lowly and lonely be my grave,
Fast by this streamlet's oozing wave,
Still to the gentle angler dear,
And heaven's fair face reflecting clear!
No rank luxuriance from the dead
Draw the green turf above my head;

But cowslips, here and there, be found,
Sweet natives of the hallowed ground,
Diffusing nature's incense round !
Kindly sloping to the sun
When his course is nearly run,
Let it catch his farewell beams,
Brief and pale, as best befits ;
But let the melancholy yew
(Still to the cemetery true)
Defend it from his noon-day ray,
Debarring visitant so gay :
And when the robin's boding song
Is hushed the darkling boughs among,
There may the spirit of the wind
A heaven-reared tabernacle find,
To warble wild a vesper hymn,
To soothe my shade, at twilight dim !
Seldom let feet of man be there,
Save bending towards the house of prayer ;
Few human sounds disturb the calm,
Save words of grace, and solemn psalm !
Yet, would I not my humble tomb
Should wear an uninviting gloom,
As if there seemed to hover near,
In fancy's ken, a thing of fear ;
And, viewed with superstitious awe,
Be duly shunned, and scarcely draw
The sidelong glance of passer by,
As haunt of sprite with blasting eye !
Or noted be by some sad token
Bearing a name in whispers spoken !
No ! let some thoughtful schoolboy stray
Far from his giddy mates at play,
My secret place of rest explore,
There pore on page of classic lore :
Thither let hoary men of age
Perform a pensive pilgrimage,
And think, as o'er my turf they bend,
It woos them to their welcome end :
And let the woe-worn wand'ring one,
Blind to the rays of reason's sun,
Thither his weary way incline,
There catch a gleam of light divine :
But, chiefly, let the friend sincere
There drop a tributary tear ;
There pause in musing mood, and all
The bygone hours of bliss recall—
Delightful hours ! too fleetly flown !
By the heart's pulses only known !

PARTICULAR INVITATIONS.

PARTY-WORK is confessedly busy in all parts of the British empire. It is, according to *Junius*, as quoted time out of mind by the *Examiner*, "the madness of many for the gain of a few." Exactly the same sentiment was embodied long before the days of *Junius*, by a proverb—a right musty aphorism—"Fools make feasts, and wise men eat them." Parties, nevertheless, are necessary to the great ends of social life. Where could the young people fall in love with each other, if not at parties either for dinner, tea, or supper, or two of the three combined? Where would married ladies confabulate about fashions and house-keeping? Where would old maids and bachelors alleviate their miserable lives with cards, if there were no parties? Parties, in short, are indispensable—without parties the world would be a desert.

There are various kinds of parties, as of almost every thing else—pleasant parties—dull parties—musical parties—dancing parties—parties of children full of romps, of youths and maidens sighing for impracticable happiness, and of stayed married people taking things coolly. In the formation of parties, great skill is required to render them at all agreeable, and it is to the consideration of what is necessary for that purpose, that the present paper is to be devoted.

The greatest bore in the world is what is called a *meeting of creditors*. Say you have been dining right and left for a long time over the whole town, without ever thinking that all this civility on the part of your friends was to be repaid in kind by yourself, in order that the common chain of connection might be kept unbroken. At length, some day about the beginning of March, your wife takes you at an unguarded moment, as you are just planting yourself by the fireside, with your last tumbler in your hand, and commences a harangue about the necessity of

paying back some of your late dinners. "There's the Browns, the Whites, and the Reids—they have not been in our house this twelvemonth, although we have dined twice with every one of them in that time, besides an odd tea and supper at the Whites's last November. Then there's the Smiths, the Wrights, and the Slaters—hardly any of them have ever been with us at all. I think absolute shame to meet Mrs Slater, never having yet asked them since they were married, though I'm sure when she and I were at the school together, we thought we never could have lived separate for a day. Then there's the Jacksons, the Jamiesons, and the Thomsons. Mrs Jamieson was my mother's most intimate friend, and takes *such* an interest in us! We've never had her but once—although you may recollect what a splendid, what a most respectable party she made up for us, the very Friday night after our marriage. The most of these are people that never go out to supper, and, in fact, after the dinners we have got from them, it would be a disgrace to us to ask them for an evening. We must just have them all to dinner. We'll make it a handsome one, and be done with it; and we may the rather do so, that we have had so little company lately. Just leave it all to me."

Mrs B. having thus made all clear to demonstration, you are obliged, whether you incline or not, to invest your wife with a commission of botheration against the Browns, the Whites, the Reids, the Smiths, the Wrights, the Slaters, the Jacksons, the Jamiesons, and the Thomsons—peaceful innocent people! the half of them at this time sleeping in their beds, unwitting of any design against their peace whatsoever, while the rest are sitting by their own firesides like yourselves, congratulating each other upon not being obliged to go out on this sleety wintry night. "There will just be exactly twenty,* including ourselves," says

* In good society, twelve is looked upon as the utmost number that can be admitted to a dinner table.

your spouse, as she seals up the last note—"a nice party ; and it *will* be such a load off my mind."

Left afterwards to your own reflections, you say to yourself, "well, twenty is certainly a great number of people ; but yet, when I think on't, the whole of these are my wife's acquaintances, and all of them very sombre quiet people. There's Tom Young—the best fellow on earth for keeping people in spirits at a large dinner party. And there's my good honest friend Bob Gray—a capital hand at a song. And now I think on it, there's both Thomas Simpson and Bill Forbes—what nights I have had in their lodgings before I was married ! and, how the thought smites me ! I have never yet had them once with us since that event took place." You disclose these ideas to your loving partner, thinking very feasibly that amidst some twenty of the acquaintances which she has brought you into, three or four of yours might surely be admitted. But, alas ! here you calculate without your hostess. Simply as Mrs B. brought the affair above-board last night, it had all been planned in that wise head of hers for days before. The party was made up in her mind's eye long ere she spoke of it to you. The table was spread and filled ; the whole planisphere of it was a fixed idea with her. There were just to be the Browns, the Whites, and the Reids—the Smiths, the Wrights, &c. There was not room in the plan for an additional salt-foot. "These friends of yours, my dear, I dare say they are all very fine fellows ; but you know our dining-room will not admit the whole length of our tables. You would insist, you know, upon staying in this wretched cramped house, where I have hardly room to turn myself ; and if the table will dine no more than those people I have already invited, it is not my blame." Glad to escape from the subject of the small dining-room, which you have winked at as hard as you could for several months past, you give up friends, Tom, Bob, and Bill, and make up your mind just to make the best of the sacred nine and their wives.

Well, the day comes ; the house is kept in hot water, or rather *out of it*, for three days. There is a rubbing and a scrubbing, and a rioting, and a lifting of carpets, and a borrowing of tea and dessert spoons, and a boiling of things upon other people's fires, without end. You come home from business an hour earlier than usual, in order to prepare your armoury of liquors, and dress for dinner ; and, to your surprise, you find Mrs B., even at this late hour, flying about the dining-room, like an inspired Pythoness, a perfect vision of tawdry and drudging dishabille, marshalling glasses and dinner-rolls, and ever and anon calling down stairs to ascertain if such and such a thing be yet put to the fire—and all this within forty minutes, or less, of the time when she must appear, an elegantly-dressed, well-bred, and sedate lady, at the head of a table, which she at present does not seem fitted even to wait upon. Having got all preparations adjusted, you walk into your drawing-room, and, with the feeling of a St Sebastian tied to the tree and waiting for the arrows, you take up a book, which you pretend to yourself you are reading—till the expected guests shall come. Just upon the hour, the first knock is heard at the door, and you watch, with a fidgettiness there is no describing, every movement you hear below stairs. The footfall of the first guest, as he ascends, produces, in a person all but hardened in hospitable intercourse, one of the most agonising sensations in the world ; and as your heart is by no means in this party of your wife's contrivance, you experience the full force of the misery. The very magician, when he expected the door to open and the devil to come in, did not feel so queerly as you do when the first of this string of Whites and Browns is ushered into your presence. But this is only the first of your distresses.

It takes half an hour to collect a party of even the most experienced diners-out, and about the end of that period the state of things is this : On a sofa and a supplementary range of chairs near the fire, sit the ladies all clustered together, united, but yet unsocial, for hardly one of them

knows another, and your wife, who alone knows all, is at their head, and busily engaged in conversation with the single individual who sits beside her. In another cluster towards the door, *stand* the gentlemen, and you amongst them; one-half with their hands crossed in front, like soldiers under the command "stand at ease," and looking straight towards the fire; the other half grouped around the only gentleman who, apparently, has any thing to say. In fact, the two sexes seem here to be actually at that war which fabling poets have represented husbands and wives to have been from the beginning of time. Were there a vacant seat on the sofa, there is not a gentleman who would not throw himself upon the serried spears of a hostile army rather than take it. It may be remarked, that gentlemen have generally, from their intercourse with the world, an easy polite way of making friends with each other, on any occasion where they may be by chance thrown together. But there is a great difference between a stranger gentleman and a stranger lady. Somehow or other, one's wife is always a cast above one's self in gentility. She is more dignified naturally, or more under artificial restraint, or something or other: hence, I know many men as very plain familiar persons, while I could not speak to their wives without a great deal of polite and deferential reserve. This difficulty as to the ladies is a matter which tends to add greatly to the horrors of the evening, now fairly commenced.

When a party of this kind is finally seated at table, nothing but a real meeting of creditors could possibly be more sombre than it is, and no situation but that of the debtor could be more embarrassing than yours. Mr Brown is placed between Mrs White and Mrs Reid, and Mrs Brown is stuck in between the husbands of those ladies; but there is no prismatic phenomenon to make these colours harmonise or blend, as in their namesakes of the rainbow. The whole is an inert mass of dull well-dressed people, without a single spark of Promethean fire to put it into action,

and which even the best of meat and drink is exerted upon in vain. The dinner is eaten without any other conversation than what is necessary for the interchange and distribution of the good things upon the table; and even the half cheerful request of a dram from some heartier guest than the rest, placed near the landlord, fails of its usual effect in lighting up a general smile, if it does not absolutely throw some into a gloomy quandary as to the propriety of mentioning such a thing as spirits at such a table. After a little while, the sacred nine, with your wife as a kind of Calliope at their head, retire, and then the table looks like a tree which has suddenly shed all its blossoms—unless that *the fruit* remains behind. You then move to the head of the table, and make an effort at inspiring cordiality, by requesting your friends to draw up near you. But all won't do. These good decent men will drink, and drink, and drink, and yet be dull. Two or three of them talk in groups about some stupid municipal matter, or what some clergyman said about something one day (such people have a way of reporting clergymen's sayings with a great deal of reverential appreciation), or about any other matter of narrow local interest. But every thing like the true social effect of the grape is absent, and—so, after sitting very inanely for two hours or so (drinking a great deal of wine, however), a particularly grave and reverend signior makes a motion that you should go up to the drawing-room, in order to get a cup of tea; a proposition you assent to, but without any hope of its either cheering or inebriating the men you have been entertaining. Here the before-dinner scene is renewed in all but its former stiffness and coldness, and then, and then, they all troop off, leaving you in an utter vacation of spirits, your house revolutionised, and your wife in raptures with the compliment paid to her by Mrs Reid, as to what a *pleasant party* she had got together.

LOSSES IN FAMILIES.

MANY families grow up and live long together, without the bond of their affections being once either strained or broken. They know that death is the common lot of humanity; they see it daily carrying off neighbours and acquaintances. Some of their own relations have felt its power; and they have thus become familiar with all the symptoms and fashions of external woe: but the destroyer has never intruded on their own sacred domain. Year after year, diseases have prevailed around them, and made successive inroads upon every fireside; but theirs has still escaped. They thus become in some measure singular, and isolated from the rest of the world—their hearts certainly not closed against its sympathies, but not deeply exercised in them. If a mother remain long inconsolable for the loss of a child, they think she is not altogether blameless. “All must die,” some member of the establishment will remark; “some are early cut off; some are spared long: but the stroke will come. Why, then, contend against what we cannot help? Resignation is both absolutely necessary, and it is proper. Besides, our duties are not ended when those who are dearest to us are taken away; we must still attend to our own interests, and make provision for those who are dependent upon us. The business of life must not be interrupted.” “It’s all true you say,” was the reply we once heard given to a female acquaintance by a woman of the humbler rank in Scotland, who had endured serious family bereavements: “but, oh, woman, it’s plain you never lost a bairn!”

Such a family as that we have been describing have never had their attachments towards each other greatly tried. There has been no occasion for a display of indignant unforgiveness on the part of one, or of unwearied persevering love from another. Their feelings are all of an equable cast. This quiet, however, is broken in upon

at last. A son, perhaps, in the pride of his days, is seized with a grievous disease. His mother watches him with anxiety; but she entertains almost a certain expectation that he will speedily be restored to his former health. None of the symptoms are decidedly against hope; the sufferer's constitution has not been weakened by intemperance, by irregularity of any kind, or by previous ailments; so the chance of recovery is in his favour. He still sinks; but all maladies have their crisis; and she thinks, every night, that surely he will be better to-morrow. With what tender solicitude does she minister to the wants of his sick-bed! How she watches his looks, and catches up the faintest expression of a desire on his pallid countenance! Her hopes of his recovery daily become weaker and weaker. Her first expectations of his recovery vanish. Every look of the attending physician is watched with an anguish almost indescribable, and she now seriously apprehends the very worst. The features of her son at length assume the rigid and sunken aspect of those of a corpse, and she cannot mistake the dim glare of the eye before it shuts in everlasting rest. Thus the delusion comes to an end; and when the child of her affection, perhaps the expected prop of her declining years, at last breathes his last on her bosom, she feels as if some cord that bound her heart had for ever given way. Who can pretend to describe her sufferings, as, stretched afterwards on a couch which almost seems her own deathbed, she gives way to a grief which any attempt to interrupt or soften is felt by all her friends as if it would only be an impertinence? The whole frame seems convulsed; moans of deepest anguish seem to issue, not from the organs of speech, but from the heart itself; and ever and anon, as the terrible image of her dying son, with all the horrors of the neighbouring death-chamber, comes into her mind (for it will not be banished), she utters frantic cries, which pierce the ears of all within the limits of that sorrow-stricken house. When language is found, it is employed in exclamations which testify the love

and admiration she felt towards her son—a love far transcending, she now thinks, all she ever experienced regarding the rest of her children. The rest, indeed—the fortunate living—seem as nothing in her eyes ; it appears to her as if she had never loved any but him who now lies so powerless, so forlorn, and whom she is never to see again. “ My beautiful—my brave ! ” as the tragic poet has finely expressed a mother’s feelings on such an occasion :—him whom every body loved and admired—who was always so cheerful and so affectionate—can it really be—for, after all she has seen, this question will occur—that you are no more ?

It is fortunate for human nature that grief, however overwhelming at first, daily becomes less severe. Were the earliest impressions of our sorrow for ever to remain unobliterated, the world would speedily be filled with lamentation and woe. Thus, Time rolls on, and the sufferings of the disconsolate mother become less poignant. The severity of the trial she has endured has softened her nature, and made her resigned to the dispensations of an inscrutable Providence. The recollection of her lost son is recalled to her by almost every passing circumstance ; if there is an occasion of rejoicing in the family, she thinks, “ this would have been a time of delight to *him* if he had been spared.” She sees the place he would have occupied among his brothers and sisters ; she considers the very words he would have used, had he been alive to join in their conversation. If she hears a tune played, she remembers it was his favourite ; if she sees a fine landscape, the thought passes in her mind how he delighted in woodland scenery. Another of her family falls, and another, and another ; but she does not deceive herself now. “ The first time,” she acknowledges, “ she never thought her poor son would die till she saw him lifeless before her ; all the rest, from the moment they were taken ill, she was prepared to see cut off. The earliest was snatched from her ; those that died afterwards were resigned.

Thus does grief soften the heart, and teach us not only to sympathise with others, but how to bear our own ills more calmly. But for its humanising influence, how hard-hearted would men become—how wrapt up each in his own self-sufficiency! Nay, even if the present economy of nature were altered but in a single respect—if the destiny of death were still allotted to all, but were postponed in each individual of our species to a certain period of time, how materially would the aspect of society be altered, and how callous would all the world remain, when one by one they saw their fellow-men removed from this earthly scene! Then with truth might people say, “Why mourn for him?—his time was come.” It is because of the uncertainty that prevails—because some are cut off in the bud, and some in the prime—some by severity of disease, some by violence—and because we had hopes of enjoying their society longer, or that death might have come in some way less painful to themselves—because we are convinced that the government of affairs is completely beyond our own control and calculation—that we feel and acknowledge our own weakness, how closely we are concerned to possess each other's sympathies, how entirely we are dependent on a higher power! Thus has kind heaven made our sorest griefs the best blessings, even if we look no further than to the condition of man in the present world.

INTENTIONS.

THERE is an old Spanish saying, that hell is paved with good intentions. For the extent of the commodity, the earth might be paved with them too; and then they would be very much in their proper place with respect to mankind, for there is nothing we are so perpetually trampling under our feet. What a great and glorious world this would be, if it were to be estimated by intentions! Even

amongst the humblest of us, and in the humblest details of our humble lives, what fine intentions we are always forming! We might all be gods for our intentions. The very thief, the day before his being finally captured and put on the road for the gibbet, had excellent intentions. The old abandoned sinner, the hour before he was struck by the mortal illness which carried him off, had the noblest intentions. The most virtuous and devout man in the country never had better, if so good. Oh that we could all be judged by our intentions!

In plain positive truth, these same intentions are the most pernicious things in the world, and men ought rather to be condemned, than excused, for entertaining them. If a man has no good intentions, he knows that he is decidedly wicked, and has the chance of being some day roused to a sense of his unrighteous state, and thereafter becoming reformed. But the man of good intentions goes dreaming on all his life, in reality a wicked and erring creature, but constantly absolving himself from his sins through the efficacy of this pretended virtue, which only permits and urges him to sin more. Far honester and far safer is he who does not pretend to conceal either from himself or others that he is a wretch, than the mean dastard who sneaks into a good character with himself, and at the same time deceives the world, by an assumed and fallacious merit. In fact, every good intention, not in proper time carried into effect, is a palpable offence; for, but for it, we might have felt the necessity of *doing* some lesser good: it only tends to supplant the performance that might have otherwise taken place. Good intentions tickle the conscience till it sleeps, and then carry their victim forward, in blind and fatal security, to destruction.

As all men think all men mortal but themselves, so also do all men think all men liable to moral rebuke but themselves. When we hear some fervent pulpit admonition, accompanied by a justly severe view of the deceitfulness of human nature, we think that all this is very proper for peo-

ple in general, but never once suppose that we, in particular, are in the way of needing it. In the same way, it is by no means unlikely that many individuals who read this little essay will say either in words or thoughts, How just the writer is upon thousands whom we know ! But not one in ten, perhaps, will bring the moral home to himself, and inquire to what extent *he* may have been guilty of only meaning well. *This, however, is what every one should do.* We would indulge the hope that many might thus receive a shock sufficient to awake them from the dream of good intentions, and henceforward endeavour to *do* what they have hitherto contented themselves with only *designing to do*. Let every one be on the watch for the least symptom of an intention which is excluding a performance. Let him open his eyes to the injury likely to result from such a habit. Let him reflect, when he sees another die without performing something which ought to have been done, that probably that individual had just as good intentions as any one ever has—only, as usual, he was cut off while in a state of dalliance with the performance. So blind are men, that we have heard an individual rail in no very measured terms at a neighbour who had died without doing a certain thing which he seemed to consider necessary ; and when the railer was asked if he, who was in exactly the same circumstances with the deceased, had taken care to do that duty, he confessed that he had not. Oh no, but he intended to do it. He did not reflect that his neighbour was probably as much alive as he was to the propriety of doing the duty in question, but had always, like himself, been content with the intention. The uncertainty of life might have shown to our friend that he was liable, in one moment, if it so pleased God, to be in the same liability to blame as his deceased neighbour ; but then how few ever reflect on this tritest of all truths !

Thus it is that men go on—doing many things which they ought not to do, but, as for the good which they *ought* to do, contenting themselves, in a great measure, with inten-

tions. Intentions serve mankind instead of positive good ; but we have heard wonderfully little of any similar or corresponding thing for preventing evil. Wrong is a reality—good, it would appear, little better than a fancy. The question, however, arises, Will this please the Being whom we serve, and who is at last to judge of our earthly merits ? Assuredly it will not. Before the seat of that Being, we will be interrogated respecting our *deeds* ; and how will the gauze of *intentions*, when we hold it up, appear in that mighty Eye, if deeds be wanting to prove the reality of those good principles which we have professed ?

Even considered as a matter of worldly wisdom, the necessity of substituting performance for intention is obvious. No one ever gets rich upon intentions. It is only in so far as a man *acts* that he acquires any thing. He may entertain the most earnest intention to do something, and spend a whole day in fixing it in his mind. But, in the words of the English proverb, it will butter no parsnips. No, nothing but the actual work gains the money. Even in those numerous details of life which are not connected with the winning of our bread, but only tend to conveniency and courtesy between man and man, intentions serve to as little purpose. If we sincerely want to accommodate or befriend our neighbours, we must really bestir ourselves for the purpose, and actually write the letter, or go the errand, or pay the visit, which may be necessary. Nothing *tells* but the performance. In reality, the *action* often costs less trouble than the contemplation of it. We often voluntarily triple the sacrifice, by encumbering our minds with a load of intention, and keeping it there for hours or for days, when we might have at once relieved ourselves by doing what we always knew we could not avoid doing. We do not tell our young friends never to intend doing any good or useful deed ; but we are most anxious that the action should follow the intention almost as rapidly as the report of a musket follows the ignition of the powder. Delay is the canker of human life. There is nothing done well that

is not done at once with promptitude and decision, and, if necessary, pursued with diligence. Let us hear no more, then, of this wretched cant about intentions. Do not let us hear people who are burnt out talk of the hardship of losing all, when they had *intended* in a day or two to effect an insurance on their property. Do not let us see families launching out into expenses they are unable to support, and reconciling it with their conscience by saying they *intend* to be more saving next winter. Away with such deceptions! Let us see men go at once to the point, and do that which it is their duty to do, and not fritter away their time with those meaningless make-believes, which are as discreditable to their intellect as they are injurious to their interests.

UMBRELLAS.

THERE is one piece of property, which is nobody's property, or every body's property, or is not property at all—and that is, *Umbrellas*. "'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands," was not more truly said of the circulating medium, than it might be said of this curious branch of the floating capital of the nation, which fructifies in the hands of no one, but is continually going or flying about in the hands of this person and that person, and is always getting worse and worse. Umbrellas, I must confess, are to me a puzzle. Some people, certainly, do buy them new, for there are shops in every considerable town of the realm, where they are sold. But I wonder what kind of people they can be who do so; for one might just as well buy two acres of the wind, in the hope of handing them down as a patrimony to one's descendants. Alas! for the instability of all earthly things, and umbrellas in particular! Who can say that he ever actually owned an umbrella? Umbrellas are things of no power of adherence

to man. They make unto themselves wings, and fly away. Just suppose, for the sake of argument, that you have been so far left to yourself, one day, as, in a fit of love for your race, to buy an umbrella. Suppose, further, that from a fondness for the article, and an experience of the volatility of this species of so-called property, you have taken it to an engraver, and watched over him till he painfully carved your name upon it, by way of fixing down its affections to you for ever. Vain endeavour! The treacherous and ungrateful fabric of silk and whalebone will walk by your side for a little while, fending you lovingly from showers and snowdrifts; but soon, alas! too soon—three weeks after marriage—you look about you, and where is it?—why, eloped right slick away with another love—a new acquaintance, fairly deserted you with your three children, and commenced a career of vagrancy over the world, which will only terminate with its being blown to shivers some day by the vengeful blast of heaven, as its last proprietor turns the corner of some windy street.

Somebody once made an amusing book by imagining the adventures of a guinea, and describing the characters and fates of a number of individuals into whose hands the coin was supposed to have successively fallen. But the adventures of an umbrella would obviously be a far more richly varied and piquant composition. A friend, say, has been one day overtaken by a determined rain, while visiting you: the time has arrived when he *must go*—for he has a particular appointment—and when you, moreover, are excessively anxious that he *should go*, for you are just about to sit down to dinner, and have heard enough of your wife's intentions that forenoon, to know that a new eater, in addition to the usual number, is not desirable, either for his own sake or theirs. Well, what can you do? Your friend manfully proposes to brave the storm, saying, as he looks out and buttons up his coat, that it is a mere skiff, and is just going off—though, for your part, you never saw a more perfect *even-down pour*, as they say in Scotland, in your

life. Why, you *must* offer your umbrella. Flesh and blood will not have it otherwise. All the humanities—all commandments, human and divine, order it so. One last glance, then, at the dear object—bought at White's one little month ago—fondled and rejoiced in since, beyond all common sentiment—and away it goes, never to be seen more, leaving you with the bitter consciousness that you have been accessory, with your eyes open, to the abduction of the very object which, next to your wife, you chiefly held dear on earth.

This is the first move in the maze of confusion. Your umbrella, faithfully promised to be returned that night, does not re-appear, as, indeed, you never expected that it would, for it is not in the nature of man to return an umbrella, and there's an end on't. So, as the rain is worse than ever, and your wife will not hear of your going out "with such a cold hanging about you," without a defence against the weather, you yourself are obliged to become an abductor of other men's umbrellas in your turn, and borrow one from a neighbour. Thus, with the dismal sense upon your mind that one crime leads to another, and that your robbing another of that which not enriches you (for of course by this time it is neither the late owner's, nor can you calculate upon it being long your own), you take off your weary way through the rain—mentally comparing, at the same time, the cottony vulgarity of the present article with the well-chosen and smart-looking convenience which yesterday was generally but erroneously supposed by mankind to be yours. The rain ceases while you are waiting in some house or shop, and you depart without your umbrella—that is to say, without the umbrella you lately carried, for to use any of the possessive pronouns respecting this fugitive article, is evidently an absurdity in terms. When you get home to dinner, and recollect the loss, you send to make inquiries, but learn that the missing article was lent to somebody who called soon after you left the place, and is by this time, in all probability through as many hands as

the body of the hunchback in the Arabian Nights' Entertainments.

The labyrinthine winding through with umbrellas sometimes travel is really astonishing. Reader, had you ever one, which you had once been in the ridiculous habit of calling your own, lent to you on a great emergency, by a friend, who, on inquiry, was found to have come by it, no doubt, honestly, but from a place or person the last in the world you would have expected it to have found its way to? Such things have been, and they are but a sample of the common wonders that enter into the fates of umbrellas. It is a sad thing to have the very umbrella which you have been *cultivating*—the umbrella that has been carried near your heart, under your arm, for weeks—the love of your bosom, in short, ravished away from you, and sent a-spinning through the world, here and there, in a thousand directions—but well is it with you when the case is no worse. Hard as that is, there is something harder and more heartrending still, in your once more overtaking your umbrella in its last days, and being shocked by the ravages which time, and handling, and perhaps the mender, have wrought upon the once delicate constitution of your early flame. *There* is a misery—there *is* a true agony of agonies. What struggles have you then to endure between old attachment—a sentiment that will not be suppressed—and the natural loathing you cannot at the same time help feeling for the tawdry and squalid aspect of the object, with the sense you have of the wretched hands through which it must have come, since it was, as you thought, *yours*! If any one entertains a real hatred for a man, he could wish him few worse wishes than that he might buy and cultivate an umbrella, and then, after long years, fall in with it again, when it had been fully drabbed, and drudged, and dragged through a thousand turns of good and evil fortune.

A great deal of the vagrancy of umbrellas is owing to their being so frequently exchanged at public places by

what is called mistake ; that is to say, a gentleman takes some other person's umbrella out of the *trap*, as it is too pertinently termed, instead of his own, which he leaves behind. There is one most notable phenomenon attending these mistakes, namely, that no one ever mistakes a *worse* umbrella for his own. People in these cases seem to act unconsciously and instinctively upon the great commercial maxim, that it is needless to make a barter without some advantage. Let you get your umbrella twice exchanged in this manner, and you will find yourself to have sunk from an affair of five-and-twenty shillings, down to a blue, brass-ringed dowdy, which ten years ago cost three and sixpence. Three removes, indeed, are as bad as a fire in this case. The worst thing about such an exchange, effected against your will, is the having to protect yourself homewards through the rain with such a wretched rag as generally falls into your hands. In fact, the whole phenomenon affords a lively illustration of the natural succession of an age of inferior metal to that which went before it ; you begin with gold, and you end with brass.

Mankind are divided into two great classes in reference to umbrellas—one which buys umbrellas, and one which does not. There is no difference between the two as to the amount of their wealth in umbrellas : you are just as sure to find an umbrella in the lobby of the one as in the lobby of the other. It is impossible, however, to deny that the man who actually buys an umbrella, is a man of a most patriotic and benevolent disposition—one who suffers in the behalf of mankind at large, and is therefore entitled to the thanks of his fellow-creatures. The *sic vos non vobis* is most truly applicable in their case ; even the unfortunate generation of bees is hardly more disinterested. I would therefore propose, that, whenever a man dies, who, it can be ascertained, has spent any part of his fortune in this manner, his survivors ought at the very least to testify their gratitude by erecting a mausoleum, with a top in the shape of an umbrella, over his grave ; by which

peculiarity the emblem would be conspicuously distinguished from all other monuments, so that in walking through a churchyard, posterity might know when a mere poet or philosopher was referred to, and when the great inhabitant below was one who had (oh thrice greater fame!) signalled himself by purchasing an umbrella.

FELLOW PASSENGERS.

THE life of every individual, however humble his station, and however really insignificant he may be in point of intellectual endowments, contains something or other which it is worth while to know, and which, if recorded, might supply matter of useful reflection to persons of the most exalted attainments. The faces of men are not more various than their character and fortunes. Something is happening daily to every one of us, which forms the subject of conversation in our respective domestic circles; and if we do but go abroad into the city upon some piece of business, our return home is frequently looked for with as much anxiety as the arrival of a foreign courier in Downing Street, being fraught, to our private affairs, with consequences in which those connected with us take a far more lively interest than the nation at large, or its rulers, can possibly do in the fluctuations of continental politics. When we consider the multiplicity of transactions in which we have ourselves been engaged, and the singularity of some circumstances that have fallen out in the course of our experience, and that every person we meet is conscious of a history as peculiar, and probably as diversified, as our own, we obtain an almost boundless idea of the hidden stores of curious particulars which a limited neighbourhood, to say nothing of a large city, could disclose to the world. Even within the moving box called a stage-coach, is often contained a little society, the members of which

have been brought together by incidents, which, as they are various in themselves, are the objects of mutual curiosity, and might form the foundation of the most excellent maxims and resolutions.

Of the four insides who started from Edinburgh on the 19th day of October—the year is of no consequence—one was an elderly man, with a grave but yet benevolent and cheerful cast of countenance. He was accompanied by his son, a boy of about fourteen, with harder hands, and a look of being more inured to labour, than was to be expected from his dress. The occasion of their present journey was as follows :—From some attractive narratives of the adventures of navigators, of the wonders they have witnessed, and the glory some of them have acquired, the lad had become enamoured of the sea service, and nothing would serve him but he would be a sailor. His friends endeavoured to dissuade him from this resolution, and laid down various plans for pushing him forward in other more gainful and less hazardous, but entirely unromantic professions. The visions of an inglorious affluence could not compete, however, with those more splendid chimeras which had gained possession of the boy's imagination. The bent of his mind remained fixed, and his father, seeing no arguments could produce any effect in changing it, appeared to yield to his wishes. An assurance that he should be permitted to make a trial of the occupation which was so much the object of his desires, made him perfectly happy. He went about in a state of the greatest excitement for some days, arranging in his own mind the numerous gallant deeds he was to perform; the dangers he was to escape; the scenes of softened beauty and of gloomy grandeur he was to behold; the spectacles of barbaric pomp—crowds of black men in white garments, glittering in armour of gold, and mounted on superb coursers which were to pass before him. Floating banners, yawning gulfs, odoriferous flowers, stately palaces, roaring waves, all commingled, and formed one great incongruous

idea, which made him utterly despise the whole of the insignificant objects in his native parish, and exult in the prospect of entering in a few days on board of a vessel at Leith, with the master of which his father had agreed that he should go a voyage to Dantzic, in the course of which he himself made no doubt of achieving some notable adventure. Never boy was prouder than he when he first trode the deck ; and the offices he was employed in were performed with an alacrity, and, at the same time, a feeling of magnanimous composure, as if he were already acting a great part in the eyes of the world. His father's arrangement with the captain was, that he should not be treated with any unusual harshness, but that he should work, be clothed, fed, and lodged, in every respect, the same as an ordinary cabin-boy. He himself would have disdained to enter the ship upon any other footing ; for it would have been unworthy of one resolved, as he was, to rise to the first eminence solely by his own merits, to start in any capacity the least degree above the lowest. His bones, unused to labour, ached a good deal at first ; and when his limbs were better strung for work, he became heartily disgusted with the drudgery and common fare. He could not perceive wherein lay the honour and glory of "jumping" at every one's bidding, scrambling among ropes the whole day, which was not half so pleasant as climbing for birds' nests, from which he could desist when he pleased ; and then the tears came into his eyes when he crept to his hammock, full of the recollection of his little comfortable bedroom at home, where his mother often looked in, to speak an endearing word to him before he fell asleep. When the voyage was over, and his father met him at Leith, with offers, as he had been so anxious to acquire a proficiency in seamanship, to transfer him to a vessel about to sail immediately for another port, without the least hint of taking him, even for a few days, to visit his friends, the poor little fellow's heart was like to burst, and he fairly confessed that he was tired of sailor-

ing. He was now on his road home, perfectly willing to adopt any profession which the better judgment of his parents thought proper to select.

What a lesson is here in respect to the management of rash and inexperienced youth ! Had the father positively persisted in refusing the wishes of his son, and in forcing him into some more eligible pursuit, he might have kept him at home for a time, but with a mind rankling with discontent. Probably he would have taken his own way after all, and with such a confirmed opinion of his father's severity, that recal would have been impossible. The method taken to open his eyes to reality was the only one that could prove effectual.

The third passenger was a sickly young man—a poor scholar—whom hard study and anxiety had plunged into consumption. The story is one that is well understood—there has been too often occasion to tell it. His father's means exhausted in the first years of his education, and he cast upon his own inadequate resources ; on the one hand, ambition of usefulness and of honourable fame ; on the other, the fear of destitution. Who shall tell the brilliant hopes, the bitter disappointments, the loss of spirits, the loss of strength, the want of elasticity, the feeling as if the bones were sapless, and the blood no more ran in equal currents, the consciousness that all past exertions are vain, that all future hopes are vain, that this is a drooping unto death—can words express all these ? Then the recollections that visited the poor patient—the deceitful fancies ! He thought if he had a drink from the spring from which his mother used to draw water, it would refresh and restore the fading powers of life ; he thought, as he gasped in his small close chamber, of the healthful breezes and balmy air of his native vale, and that, if he could but breathe a draught of it, he would be well ; he thought, and here there was no delusion, that if his mother could watch his last moments, and minister to his wants, death would come in a less cheerless and repulsive

form ; and he was now on his way to realise this the only earthly solace that remained for him. The victim of a love of knowledge is not altogether excusable : but who shall have the heart to blame him

The fourth occupant of the coach sat in one of the corners, as straight up as the fishing-rod which he held beside him, and as silent. He seemed to be wrapt in an endless vision of a "glorious nibble." Being in the soundest health, of the most imperturbable mind, and in good condition as to person and clothing, he might be held a good example of the fruits of moderate wishes steadily pursued.

At the country town where the coach stops, a great crowd of persons stand round, every one more eager than another to see what kind of persons will come out of the coach, and farther, to learn their names and business if possible, that they may run home with the intelligence immediately. But we do not require to say another word as to the history of our fellow passengers. Whatever may be the interest which such companions excite while beside us, no sooner does the vehicle of conveyance arrive at its destination, than all further concern generally ceases. Each hurries off to his own house, forgetful of his late fellow traveller, whose countenance is never more recollected, unless, perhaps, when we are startled into remembrance by seeing it gleam past us in a crowd, stirring up for an instant a partial reminiscence of past days and pursuits.

THE TURN OF THE PENNY.

ONE morning, happening to pass through a suburb of this large city, where much vice, no doubt, but, perhaps, equal misery, is congregated, I overheard a wretched-looking female, with a string of knittings tied to the handle of her basket, and a few thimbles and small looking-glasses

in the bottom of it, in conversation with another who was arranging greens upon a stall. "I was out all yesterday," she said, "through mony streets, and up mony stairs; and, woman, a' that I drew was just three-halfpence: but if it were never sae little, its aye *the turn o' the penny*; and I'm just gaun out to try again the day." These touching words forcibly recalled to my mind those of a very eminent orator, when contrasting his own political consistency with that of certain of his party who had recently made a public boast of it. "It is all very well," said Sheridan, "for Lord This and Lord That to resist the temptation of place; but it is not so easy for me, who in all my life never possessed a shilling that I could call my own." Such was exactly the case of the poor basket-woman in comparison with that of more fortunate traders. In this great commercial country, there are said to be shopkeepers who draw over their counter four or five hundred pounds a-day. Of how little consequence to them were the entire loss of custom for a week! How small their merit in maintaining a fair and honourable character! But she! if she were a solitary widow, could the world say to her, "you have your share of good things; you have three-halfpence a-day! why should you be discontented or dishonest?" If she had a fatherless family dependent on her earnings, could she deal a sufficient morsel to all—clothe them—educate them—bid them all be thankful? If she had a husband who spent his wages in profligate riot, and left her to maintain her children, could such gains keep them with the smallest measure of comfort? Verily, if the minds of many poor were not supported by a spirit of submission and contentment, it is not easy to see how they should otherwise be prevented from becoming soured, exasperated, and desperate. When this unhappy consequence does ensue, they are certainly not in any respect justifiable—we cannot say that human laws ought not to punish them; but their cases demand a more lenient consideration than if they had erred at the instigation of less

pressing temptation. When a capital crime is committed, it starts before us all at once in its full enormity; the inducement or the provocation appears totally inadequate to have urged its perpetration; and the guilty author, denounced as possessing nothing in common with his fellow men but the shape, is denied every access to their sympathies. But an abhorrence of depravity ought never to steel the heart with a determined animosity against the veriest wretch: we can estimate the amount of guilt, but not relatively. We cannot tell how the mind of him who suffers for his wickedness, may have been studiously perverted from his youth, or how the hard usage of the world seared his better feelings, clouded his understanding, and nourished the evil passions, from inconsiderable beginnings, into fearful energy. Because we are placed beyond the sphere of temptation, we are too apt to deem ourselves proof against its power; we cannot see why others should have yielded more than we. "Sir," is a boast not unfrequently heard, "I am above such a thing; I would not act so basely for the world." No, not for the world perhaps; but to keep life and soul together—to satisfy the hunger of those whose pangs it is more grievous to witness than to suffer in our own persons—who can tell what he would do in that emergency? Many citadels have the reputation of being impregnable, only because they were never assailed. What is then to be done? Are we to look to the palliating circumstances alone, when a misdemeanour comes before us; or whenever a case of distress is presented, are we to be indiscriminately charitable? This is not what should be done to the full extent; but, at the same time, we should never forget that, in denying an importunate beggar, we perhaps furnish him with a justification in his own eyes for resorting to dishonest or violent means of procuring what he cannot obtain from the pity of his fellow-creatures: and, above all, we should never grudge their small gains to the exertions of ingenuity or labour, however humble. How can we tell but it is

the last effort the miserable objects before us have resolved to make, and that, if we close our hearts against their appeals, we are in fact thrusting them back among the ranks of the openly and hopelessly profligate! If we suppose that the poor creature who sold three-halfpence worth of goods in a day, realised by her bargains one hundred per cent., she must have cleared only the pittance of a half-penny farthing; yet she was by this success encouraged to go on in her laudable endeavours to procure an honest livelihood.

Let us not, then, turn with a contemptuous sneer from the picture of human beings, however mean and poor, exerting their skill in honest though almost ineffectual labour. We have often thought there is a blessing on industry, even if exerted in the most trifling degree. How respectable it seems in comparison with idleness and pampered vice! Near the gateway of one of the public offices in Edinburgh, there sits every day, during both summer and winter, from an early hour in the morning till nightfall, a poor old woman, a widow, whose occupation is to sell fruits and small comfits to children, and by which she realises about the sum of threepence a-day. She also employs herself in knitting, but in this she is not regularly engaged, and altogether clears from one shilling and ninepence to two shillings a-week. With this humble weekly pittance she not only keeps herself from depending on the parish, but gives support, such as it is, to two children, left to her charge by the death of her husband, who was killed by the falling in of a quarry. Now, the lot of this very poor and humble widow would by many be reckoned deplorable, and in the last degree mean. Yet, how noble are her feeble efforts!—how noble are the efforts of all such unaided individuals!—and how much are these efforts calculated to produce happy reflections, in comparison with the exertions of the dissolute in squandering the means of others, or of that listless indolence which induces reliance for support on public charity! The poor industrious

widow is a respectable member of society, while the dissolute spendthrift and the competent pauper are equally objects of reproach.

The persevering efforts of poor women in gaining an honest subsistence by their industry, are nowhere so conspicuous as in Scotland, and that not only in the more unsophisticated parts of the country, but in the populous and refined cities. A class of individuals rendered destitute by family deprivation, and who would, if in the adjacent country, most likely rely on the parish—that is, depend on compulsory alms—for support, here project many little schemes for acquiring an honourable and in some measure independent subsistence; and how gratifying is it to state, that their endeavours are generally blessed!—blessed not only as regards their individual exertions, but as respects the welfare of the whole community. These will assuredly be esteemed pleasing characteristics of a people. Never, therefore, let us forget the utility of such admirable examples, or turn with affected contempt from the efforts of the humble and industrious poor. Much rather let us learn to sympathise in their fate, as beings fully as good but not so lucky as ourselves, and in the spectacle of enduring hope which they oftentimes present, be more and more impressed with the conviction, that Providence never refuses to yield protection and consolation to the afflicted, nor leaves, unassisted, the desolate to mourn.

TEA AND SUPPER.

“I hate your immense loads of meat: that’s country all over. Something nice and a little will do.”—GOLDSMITH’S *Essays*.

SUCH was the saying of the exquisite Beau Tibbs; and whether with or without a cautious regard to the scrankiness of his larder, whether from real taste or from economy, there was certainly much propriety in the remark. The more formal the party—the more immense the pre-

paration—the more weighty the load of meat and vessels—just so much less chance is there of that light-hearted hilarity, that social and cordial union, which forms the charm of a miscellaneous party. From a conviction of this, but without any positive knowledge of what does constitute a pleasant meeting, many persons abjure dinner-parties, as liable to all the objections we lately stated against them, and seek for ease and felicity in invitations styled technically *at homes*, which implies tea and supper. No doubt such people are safer here. Tea and supper generally require candles, by which there is always more sociality than under the business-like thing called daylight. This is so much in favour of the hopes of the inviters. Then, tea and supper always implies the drawing-room in the first instance, where there is likely to be a little more ease than in the fixed parallelogram of sitters, which distinguishes the dining-room. This is so much more. *Between* tea and supper, moreover, there is more variety of conversation, more variety of amusement, and a greater chance of the various divisions of the company becoming coherent, and agreeable to each other, than in any part of the penitential solemnity styled a dinner. All these advantages, however, will be in a great measure lost, if a proper attention be not paid to the selection of the guests. A meeting of Blacks and Whites, and Slaters and Wrights, all in pairs, called together for the mere commercial purpose of clearing off so many debts, and unrelieved by any admixture of good talkers and good singers, would freeze the nectar, and poison the ambrosia of the immortal gods.

A dinner-party is generally gone into with one's eyes open; a tea and supper party is often a matter into which one is betrayed. Some day, your wife mentions to you, quite in what Mrs Pringle called an *overly* way, that she happened to meet her old friend Mrs Nicholson on the street that day, and, not having seen her for a good while, had asked her to come up next Friday night, bringing the Misses Nicholson along with her—just in an easy way.

This passes as a very simple matter, and there is no more thought about it for some time. However, meeting a friend or two of your own whom you have not seen for a long while, and recollecting that there is to be somebody wish you next Friday at any rate, and that you will therefore be unable to attend to any business that evening, why, you ask your two friends to come too, as it will make little difference whether your guests be three in number or five : besides, as your wife sagely remarks, "these two young gentlemen will be company to the Misses Nicholson." That afternoon you are informed by Mrs B., that, recollecting a particular school acquaintance, whom she had not seen for many years, but who was now spending a few days in town with Mrs Armstrong, she had sent to invite her with the said Mrs Armstrong, and Mrs Armstrong's son and niece, for the same evening. The affair now begins to look serious, and you half think, with Bucklaw in the *Bride of Lammermuir*, that it will be as well just to make a night of it. Having ultimately resolved upon this course, you set your wits to recollect others whom it would be "as well" to invite on the present occasion, and "so," as Mrs B. remarks, "be done with all parties for the winter." "Since we are to have so many at any rate," says your truly wise helpmate, "it will be best to make up a good set when we're at it—for, in an evening affair, you know, a few more does not make much difference." There is then a hurry-skurry issue of notes to this one and that one, whom you were not at all thinking of inviting till this opportunity occurred, and who, good souls! would far rather stay at home than thus be dragged at the chariot-wheels of your conveniency. Some can come, and some cannot ; and on summing up the acceptances, and finding that one or two more could still be taken in, why, in all probability nothing will please Mrs B. but she will call upon several formerly omitted individuals—the very newest, or the most forgotten of your acquaintance—and ask them in an easy way, "as it is now too late to

send notes." Thus, instead of simply having the Nicholsons, in a quiet way, as you first thought, you get packed to the door with a brilliant assemblage, the half of whom are hardly known to either you or your spouse, but are mutually supposed to be each other's acquaintance, and who are no more amalgamable into a friendly composition, than the company at a sale or a picture exhibition.

In such *soirees* as this, the whole affair becomes a painful kind of *solemnity*, rather than what it ought or is expected to be. Instead of cultivating, as you desired, a better acquaintance with certain persons, and enjoying with them an interchange of ideas and feelings, such as friendship demands, you see them all the while (if you see them at all) in a kind of masquerade. No one appears in his natural character. The manners are stiff and artificial—unirradiated by a single trait or escape of real human character. The conversation, from the mutual non-acquaintance of the individuals, is necessarily general, referring to all kinds of hack, exhausted subjects, such as the theatres and the picture exhibitions: if any man alludes to a somewhat more extraordinary public amusement which has just come to town, the whole catch at it, like drowning people grasping at straws, and seem to take a sincere interest in it, while in reality they are only anxious to relieve the desperate dullness of the scene they are involved in. In fact, a request to snuff the candles is often a relief on such occasions; and if any one can tell about such a thing as Mackenzie's theory of the weather, his neighbours hang upon his blessed lips, like an excited multitude when addressed by a popular orator. One might become quite *distingue* on such occasions by a jest upon a cheese paring. Any thing—any thing will do—only let some one speak something loud enough to be heard by the rest. How fortunate on such an occasion is the recent occurrence of some great public transaction, even though it be of the nature of a calamity or accident, which may supply a few points of remark to the unhappy assemblage. If you

had not had that—so run your thoughts at the end of the evening—you would have had nothing, and the whole affair must have been passed in something little short of absolute silence. From this difficulty of conversation, people often sit for hours at a supper table, eating and drinking of the very best productions of the earth, and yet all the time inwardly experiencing the most awkward and the most unpleasant sensations. They begin to think themselves trepanned into some ridiculous scrape or dilemma, and see the full force of honest Sancho's wish—that he might be permitted to eat garlic and crusts behind a door, rather than feast in public. But all this is nothing to the attempt usually made to get some one to sing. Horace said, nearly two thousand years ago, that no private singer could ever be got to sing when asked, but that, when not asked, they never give over*—and the same thing is seen in our own day. Often have we seen half an hour spent, in a stiff miscellaneous party, like that we have been describing, before either lady or gentleman could be prevailed upon to waken the awful echoes of such a scene with a song : every one, regularly as asked, becomes suddenly affected by a grievous catarrh, or, as Signor Corri used to call it, “a leetle horse at de trot ;” and unless some one can tell upon another, which is not likely in such a collection of strangers, there is no finding out a singer either by physiognomy or phrenology. At last, perhaps, some unhappy young creature in gauze or muslin is badgered out of all resistance, and fairly forced to squeak up some modern sentimental ditty, which she occasionally practises confidently enough to her piano-forte at home, though here she is like to sink into the earth at the very thought of whispering it. Up it goes, however—the most miserable caterwauling that ever was heard. Probably the song implies some passion of no small vehemence, or describes a situation in the highest

* *Omnibus hoc vitium est cantoribus, inter amicos,
Nunquam, rogati, &c.*

degree moving. The contrast, then, between the meaning of the words, and the poor, peepy, fainting, tremulous, expressionless voice in which they are given—not to speak of various break-downs in the most emphatic parts of the performance—produces such a depressing effect upon the audience, as surpasses all description. You all feel that you have been instrumental in making a fellow-creature ridiculous, and, if you have any real generosity, execrate yourselves for the very pity which you find yourself called upon to bestow upon her.

Upon such *enjoyments* as these, the wealthy and the easy in circumstances annually expend much money, without giving either themselves or others the least real pleasure—the expenditure being solely dictated by a desire of *showing off*, or of proving their wealth and dignity before certain persons, whose good word may elevate the spenders in the scale of society. The sacred idea of hospitality and social intercourse is thus abused, that the vulgar idea of opulence may be advanced: the most valuable products of nature are brought forward and liberally distributed, not that they may cheer or recreate the individuals called together—whether thrown over the throats or under the feet of these individuals, is a matter of indifference: the only object is, that, *by their being used*, something may be argued in favour of the parties bringing them forward. We have often thought that if the money thus expended in regaling those who are already in no need of regalement, were bestowed upon the poor—or if even a fifth part of it were so expended—the condition of the humbler classes of society would be much alleviated, while the giving class would not experience the least decrease of real comfort. At the same time, it might reconcile the poorest man to his condition, to see how much of the wealth he perhaps envies is spent under the influence of an infatuation from which he is exempt, upon feasts which, unlike Mercy, bless neither the giver nor the receiver, and are just a means of rendering a certain number of persons miserable in themselves, and odious to each

other, for a certain number of hours. The crust of the labourer carries with it a relish and a blessing which rarely befall costly banquets, and there is often more real joy and social mirth over the humble potation which one embrowned hand will pass to another in the intervals of a grinding toil, than over the most delicious liquors which "respectable people" think they may innocently indulge in, while they censure and bewail the infinitely smaller indulgences of the poor. There is a balance of comfort in this, which shows that Providence has more nearly equalised the happiness of various classes of its creatures than is generally imagined.

The *improvement* which we promised upon this subject must now be attended to. It has been shown, we think, that there is no pleasure in either dinners or later and lighter entertainments, if the object be merely to give meat and drink to certain persons, or to sacrifice money in compliment to them. Some higher moral views must enter into the design. We must have the wish of increasing or keeping alive a kindly intercourse with certain fellow-creatures, whom we hold in esteem, and from whose company we experience advantage. We must aim rather at social intercourse than at either eating or drinking; above all, the idea of flattering or pleasing them by a large expense on their account, must be discarded. If we really desire to see such persons in our house, so as temporarily to form *one family with them*—for there is the secret of hospitality—we must invite them to such an entertainment as our own family may be supposed to partake of on the *better days of the week*—or perhaps a *little better* than even that—but in no case much; and then they will be at their ease with us, will enter into all the familiar converse which gives home its habitual charm, and will afterwards, in their own secret minds, respect us for the moderation of our style of living. It is also necessary that they should be invited in such parcels as are convenient to us, and agreeable to themselves. Persons of the same order in the world, and, if possible,

acquainted a little with each other, but, above all things, likely to take well to each other when they have been made acquainted, ought to be selected. One alien character has often spoilt the best concocted parties; and it is equally unfortunate when the individual is much above, as when he is much below, the general level. It may not also be amiss—especially if you are not yourself of a sprightly turn—to have some clever person, who may act as what the Germans call a *spruche sprecher*, or sayer of smart things, and so make up for your own quiescence, and that of other individuals in the company. A man of this kind becomes like a golden string to bind the incoherent members of the association together, and his good offices are too commonly necessary in this sombre island. Music is another means of amusing a miscellaneous party: few are not susceptible of pleasure from this source, and it is in general easily provided. Cards we consider, upon principle, as a vicious means of wasting time, not to speak of other evils which beset them. But as it were vain for us to attempt their expulsion from society, we neither recommend nor forbid them.

By proceeding upon moderate views like the above, we believe that entertainments of various kinds may be given, without producing much discomfort in any quarter, and with the chance of much increasing, for the time, the happiness of all parties. But it is almost vain to legislate upon the subject. Even those who may allow the force of our observations are still likely to be so much under the trammels of custom, that they will go on rendering themselves and others miserable by large showy feasts, merely because it is what society looks for. So long as human nature is liable to appreciate the means above the end, mahogany will be loaded with unenjoyed viands, and men and women reduced below the ordinary standard of cheerfulness, by being obliged to sit around it for a certain length of time, looking with a certain silly arrangement of the facial muscles, and talking (if they talk at all) at a certain degree of smallness

and nonsensicality. Evil principles in the hearts of men we could hope to correct ; but any thing that bears the sacred impress of custom, although in the most trivial details of life, makes us despair.

A TALE OF TWEEDDALE.

AMIDST the hills of that district of Scotland called Tweeddale, there are many lonely vallies, which seem remote from all human ken—little separate regions, where you may loiter for a summer's day without seeing a living thing, save a few straggling sheep, who lift up their heads in seeming wonder as you pass. Or there may rise from your foot a startled hare, or a covey of moorfowl, unused to such intrusion ; where no sound reaches your ear excepting the song of the skylark, the bleat of the sheep, the hum of the wild bee, and the low murmuring of a burn, stealing along its quiet way to pay its tribute to the Tweed. It was to one of those sequestered spots, being a stranger in the country, that I was one day led by an old man, who undertook to be my guide to the best streams for trout-fishing. But though now deserted by man, as I have described this valley, there had been a time when it was inhabited, as appeared from a roofless and ruined hut, over the walls of which the ivy and the wild-flower had apparently crept for years. I observed to my guide what a lonely dwelling it must have been. " It was so," said the old man ; " but love and youth can make any place a paradise : and happiness once dwelt there, though it did not continue ; and though the fate of its hapless inhabitants made a great noise in the country at the time, it is now in a measure forgotten, for it is more than fifteen years since a fire was kindled in that lone house." Perceiving by this that something remarkable had happened to the last occupiers of the desolated hut, and being tired with ascend-

ing and descending the neighbouring hills, I sat down, and requested the old man, who was the schoolmaster of a village where I had for some days taken up my abode, to gratify my curiosity, by repeating to me the story to which he had alluded. The place where I had chosen my seat was a little grassy bank, near the brink of the rivulet, and about forty yards below the site of the little ruin, which stood on the side of a hill ; and the old man, having placed himself beside me, began his narration.

“ My occupation as a teacher gives me, of course, an opportunity of observing with accuracy the dispositions of the youth I instruct ; and I have never met with a girl of more ardent affections, or of better temper, or who possessed more amiable qualities, than Helen Symington. She was the daughter of an honest and respectable weaver in our village, of which, as she grew up to womanhood, she was the pride. When scarce twenty years old, she married William Brydon, a sensible, well-disposed young man, who was principal shepherd to the owner of this property, and came here with him to live in that cottage which is now a ruin, but which was then, by the unwearied industry of Helen, a neat and comfortable habitation ; and never, in those early days of her marriage, did lark carol more blithely to the sun, than did she while employed in her household occupations, or, as, passing over the heather with a light step, she carried some refreshment to her William, when detained with his flock in some more distant sheep-walk. Even when left by herself in this wild solitude, she felt no loneliness, for all was peace and joy within and without. William loved her entirely, and her alone : and she knew it, and in that knowledge all her earthly wishes were complete. Yet was this feeling of felicity still increased, when, before the year had completed its circle, she sat, in a summer evening, on yonder little turf seat at the door, with her infant in her arms, watching her husband descending the opposite hill, and drawing nearer and nearer, till at length her baby shared with her in his ca-

resses. The second winter of their ~~abode~~ here was unusually severe, but it was William's care to guard his wife and his child from its inclemency, by many little ingenious contrivances to render their cottage more impervious to the cold ; while Helen looked forward each day with long-solicitude to the evening hour which restored him to a participation of its comforts, and seated him by its cheerful hearth. And thus the winter had nearly passed away, and they began to anticipate the varied joys of spring, when the birds would again sing around their cot, and all nature, awakened from its wintry sleep, would start anew into life and joy. The month of February arrived, and the weather seemed so settled and serene, that, for two successive Sabbaths, Helen, with her infant enveloped in her cloak, and accompanied by her husband, had crossed the hills to the parish church. On the second of those Sabbaths, they "took sweet counsel," and, walking together to the house of God, they conversed of a better and a purer world, where they should fear no after-parting. And as Helen listened to her husband, who was eloquent on this subject, she thought she had never heard him speak so like a minister, or seen him so full of holy hope. I notice this particularly, as it was a circumstance I shall have occasion to mention again. On the next morning after this conversation, William departed with the sheep from this valley for a distant fair. The weather was still fine when he gathered his flock, and bade farewell to his beloved Helen for three days, promising to return on the evening of the third. He had never been absent from his home all night but twice since his marriage, and that for a single night each time. His wife, however, expressed no fear from being left alone for so unwonted a time ; for the fact is, that there is in general more courage in women of her humble rank in life, than in any other, for they are too much occupied to find time for the indulgence of idle alarms ; nor do they meet with any encouragement to affect fears till the folly becomes a habit. Neither did William experience any uneasiness

on account of the solitariness of the dwelling in which he was to leave her, considering that very circumstance as the principal warrant for her safety.

“The weather, I have said, was fine at the time of his departure, but in our treacherous climate, and especially in these hilly districts, there is nothing more uncertain than a continuance of settled weather at that season of the year ; and never did it exhibit more rapid transitions than during the three days of William's absence. Before the shades of the first night had fallen on the hills, the rain had descended their sides in torrents, and swelled the little burn into a river. On the second night, the clouds had disappeared, and a keen frost succeeded, which, ere morning, arrested the water in its course, and transformed the ground for some distance round where we now sit into a frozen lake. Again, another change came o'er the spirit of the storm : dark clouds began to muster, and showers of sleet and snow to fall, till all again was hoary winter. But still, when night came on, there was seemingly, from the quietness of its descent, no depth of snow, though it had fallen at intervals for many hours, and as the time was now arrived when Helen expected to see her husband, she felt no dread of harm ; and no sooner had she put her baby to sleep, than she prepared a change of garments, a warm supper, ‘a blazing ingle and a clean hearth-stane,’ for her William, and often opened the door to listen and to look out, if haply she might discern his dark figure against the opposite white hill, descending the footpath toward his home. She was, however, as often disappointed, and returned again to heap fresh fuel on the fire, till she began to feel, first, the heart-sickness of ‘hope deferred,’ and then the heavy pressure of foreboding evil ; and when her baby waked, there was in the melancholy tones of the hymn with which she soothed him to his rest, a soul-subduing pathos ; for it has been my lot to hear again that lullaby when it sounded even more deeply affecting than it could then have done. Poor Helen continued all night

her visits to the door, till at length, just as morning began to dawn, she heard her name shouted out by the well-known voice of William. Joy came to her heart, for she thought he had seen her, and though she looked in vain for him, still he was near. But again she heard his voice, and his words fell distinctly on her ear, 'Oh Helen, Helen, I perish!' She flew with the speed of lightning down the bank; but when she approached near to this spot, her progress was arrested, for the ice, from which the water had receded below, would not bear her weight. And then it was for the first time she discovered, through the indistinct glimmering of the dawn, and by his own words, that on William's having reached the middle of the burn, where the force of the stream below had rendered it hollow, the ice gave way, and he was only kept from sinking by his arms resting on the surrounding part, which was still firm. Again and again did Helen try in each direction to reach him, in spite of his urgent entreaties to keep off, and his assurances that he had hopes of being able to maintain his position for a length of time, from the manner in which he was wedged between the ice, and its apparent thickness in that place where it had been gurgled together, though he feared to make the smallest exertion to extricate himself, lest he should go down. In this extremity there was only one course which gave the agonised Helen any chance of saving the life of her husband, and that was, to seek for aid more efficient than her own. Meantime, William was almost fainting with exhaustion from fatigue, cold, and hunger; and Helen, thinking that if she could supply him with some food, he would be better able to endure his situation till she could procure assistance, she ran to the house, and putting some of what had been intended for his supper into a small basket, she took a sheep crook, and having tied a stick to one end of it, she hooked the basket on to the other end, and in this manner conveyed it to him. At the same time she pushed a blanket close to him with the crook, and having seen him draw it by degrees round

his head and shoulders, she returned to the cottage, wrapt her child in a small blanket, and throwing her cloak around her, took it in her arms; then, having taken a hasty leave of her husband, in words which were half a farewell and half a solemn prayer for his preservation till her return, she set off on her journey of four miles to the next farmhouse, for no nearer was there a human dwelling.

“Helen Symington was at all times active, but now a supernatural strength seemed to be given her; and in spite of her burden, she proceeded swiftly through the snow, surmounting the hills with incredible rapidity, and flying rather than running down their declivities. Thus she proceeded till nearly three of the miles were passed; but the snow, which had ceased falling for some time, now again began to descend thickly, and was accompanied by sudden gusts of wind, which drove it full in her face, and prevented her seeing the different objects by which she marked her way. She wandered on in this manner, endeavouring to avoid the deeper parts of the snow, which the wind was beginning to drift into hillocks on all sides of her; while she was almost driven frantic by the fear of losing her way, and by the cries of her infant. In vain did she endeavour to warm him, by pressing his little limbs close to her bosom, and by doubling and redoubling the cloak over him, regardless of her own exposure to the biting blast. He at length gave over crying, and fearful that the torpor of death had seized him, and feeling her own strength beginning to fail, despair seemed to seize her, when the snow ceased for a short time, and she found that she had wandered far away from the road to the onstead which she so eagerly sought to reach. But thoughts of her husband again strung her nerves, and she once more regained the right direction. This happened several times; and had she been alone concerned, she must have perished; for nothing but the energy inspired by the faint hope of saving her husband and child, prevented her from lying down to die. But what a gleam of joy shot through her overspent

frame, when, on looking up, just as a fierce blast had swept by, she beheld the farm-house at a short distance ! New strength seemed now again imparted to her stiffening limbs ; and she reached the door, told her tale, and almost immediately four men belonging to the farm were ready to start, with all necessary implements, for extricating William from his singular and perilous situation. Helen's infant, which had been benumbed for many hours, showed little signs of recovery : she however delivered it, though with an aching heart, to the farmer's wife (a benevolent woman, who was herself a mother), and determined, in spite of all advice and opposition, to return to her husband. Nor, had she remained, could she have served the poor infant, who died shortly after she left the house.

"The poor distracted wife, mounted on horseback behind a man, now proceeded on her way with all the speed the animal could exert in its toilsome journey, while her whole soul was absorbed in the one desire of finding her husband alive, of which no hope could have been entertained, but for the depth of the valley, which, from the way that the wind set, might in a great measure have occasioned it to escape the drift that was fast blocking up the roads, and transforming plains into hills. But who shall calculate the years of misery which Helen seemed to endure, while this suspense hung over her ? She was, as I have said, possessed of deep and ardent feelings, and they were now strained to their utmost tension. After much difficulty in avoiding the deeper wreaths of snow, and in floundering through the less dangerous, the party at length reached the entrance of the valley. All here seemed propitious to their hopes, for the snow was but little drifted. The men who were on foot had, however, by a nearer way, which the horse could not travel, first reached the spot where, sad to tell, though poor William still retained his suspended posture, the snow was drifted over him, and he no longer breathed. They had, however, succeeded in extricating the body, which they bore to the cot, and laid

upon a bed before the arrival of Helen, who, with a frantic hope still clinging to her heart, repeated, unweariedly and often, every means to bring him back to life, though foiled in all. Alas, poor girl! her young and ardent heart had loved her husband almost to idolatry, and with him the charm of life was fled. The spring of hope and existence was dried up at the fountain head. The stroke was too heavy for her to bear, and a brain fever was the immediate consequence of her great bodily exertion and mental suffering. For a considerable time her life was despaired of; yet youth, and the natural strength of her constitution, gained a transitory triumph, and some degree of bodily health returned, but the mind had become an utter ruin. She was removed, as soon as it could be safely accomplished, back to our village, and became again an inmate of her father's house, where I have often sat for hours listening to the suggestions of her wayward fancy, where William still reigned paramount. Fortunately, all that had passed since the intensity of her suffering began, seemed quite annihilated in her recollection, for she talked of her husband as still absent at the fair, and still sung to her infant that hymn with which she soothed it to sleep on the first night of her misfortunes, and which has often forced the tears from my eyes, and the sobs from my breast. No tongue can describe the touching melody of her soft and melancholy voice, or the sweet subdued expression of her beautiful countenance, which became daily more wan and delicate, till, at the end of two years, her weakness was so great, that she was unable to rise from her chair, and I was one evening sent for in haste to see her. When I entered her father's house, I was met by the old man, who imparted to me the surprising intelligence that Helen had recovered her senses. I immediately anticipated that a change was about to take place, and had no sooner looked upon her than I was confirmed in my opinion. Sorrow had completed its work, and she was about to pass from our sight for ever. The recollection of her husband's sad fate had

returned with her reason. But neither the remembrance of it, of her own sufferings, nor the knowledge of her child's death, which she now knew for the first time, seemed to trouble her, for her thoughts were fixed on that better country where she rejoiced that they were already waiting her arrival, and spoke of the conversation which passed between William and her on the last Sabbath they were together, as an earnest which it had pleased God to vouchsafe of their happy meeting. I am an elder of the church, and it was in that capacity that Helen sent for me to pray with her, which I did with a fervour I have seldom felt. But never has it been my lot to witness an appearance so heavenly as she exhibited when I rose from my knees. She sat in her chair supported by pillows, with her hands clasped, and her dark soft eyes beaming with an expression so holy, that she seemed like some disembodied spirit, which, having been perfected by suffering, had returned to encourage and to comfort those who were still in the vale of tears. When I bade her farewell, and promised to see her next day, it was with a presentiment that I looked upon her for the last time. And so it proved; for I was next morning informed that her spirit had taken its flight about twelve o'clock the night before."

The old man thus concluded his melancholy tale; and after sitting for some time in silent reflection, my guide again spoke, and, pointing to a deep pool at some distance down the stream, informed me that large trout were sometimes caught there; and having adjusted our fishing tackle, we proceeded to it. But though our sport was unusually good, it did not banish from my mind, during that day, for a single instant, the affecting story of the ill-fated Helen Symington.

NAMES.

“WHAT’s in a name?” is the question asked by the passionate Juliet, when anxious to annihilate the space which the name and lineage of Romeo have cast between her and her lover. The same question has been asked a thousand times on lighter occasions, and generally answered, through an absence of all reflection—Nothing. This proceeds, in some measure, upon an understanding that Shakspeare has here professed *his* sense of the insignificance of a name; whereas, if we trace the play to its conclusion, it will be apparent that it was altogether designed to show how much there might be in such a small matter—no less, to wit, than the ruin of a pair otherwise fitted to render each other happy. Throwing this poetical instance out of view, it will be obvious enough, we think, from the ordinary run of facts in common life, that though a name is in many cases a matter of indifference, it is fully as often one of material importance. In all parts of the United Kingdom there are names of the most ludicrous and vulgar sound, such as Hogsflesh, Higginbottom, Clutterbuck, Gotobed, Meiklewham, M’Turk, &c. Now, these may do very well for people who have no desire to soar beyond a very humble sphere of usefulness. But we contend, that if a man of high intellectual capabilities were born with such a designation—and no doubt there have been many men so circumstanced—his name would be an effectual bar to prevent him from coming into notice. Suppose the bent of his genius lay towards a military life, could the glory of a Cæsar or a Napoleon be reaped under the name of Hogsflesh? Were he to affect poetry, could any new epic approaching to the *Paradise Lost* be published with the name Gotobed upon the title-page? No—there has been a good fortune in all great men hitherto as to their names; all of them have had smooth, euphonious, or at least not ridiculous designations, and the public may depend upon it,

that, though not a positive, it has been at least a negative cause of their success—it has at least not prevented them from coming before the world, and reaping the full benefit of their talents. Alas, however, for the Hogsfleshes and the Higginbottoms!—alas for the innocent Clutterbucks and Meiklewhams! How many of these unhappy clans, with all the power and all the will to shine, have been deterred from even attempting to scribble their names in the book of Fame, conscious that the very sound would startle and disgust the world, and procure nothing but laughter and sarcasm for all their noblest efforts! Good worthy Gotobeds, it might wake Gray himself from the dead, to think how many of you have been mute and inglorious, not for want of opportunity, or any of the other accessory aids, but simply because you trembled to give the world your address, and, thrusting back your cards into your pockets, resolved rather to die as drysalters and bakers, than shock the ears of mankind with a sound so soporiferous and so ungraceful.

Then, again, some names, though tolerable enough, are so very common, that they give no distinction, but, on the contrary, almost appear to preclude it. The name John Smith, for instance, is a very decent name; it has been borne, no doubt, by many respectable persons in all ranks of life. But who could rationally expect, with such a name, to carve out for himself a reputation for either poetry, science, or military prowess? Why, he is lost in the myriad of John Smiths, and could no more extricate himself, so as to assume a distinct and distinguished position, than he could fly in the air, or walk upon the water. A man thus entitled bears about him a doom of everlasting mediocrity, which he can no more reverse than he can regenerate his bodily constitution. He is John Smith, and he will never be more than John Smith, though he were to live to the verge of time. He might be naturally capable of saying the brightest things, of making the most useful discoveries, of embodying the most beautiful and affecting sentiments: but

let his name accompany them, and they are heard of no more. That commonplace sound would dispel the admiration of a world, and cause him to sink at once, with all his fictitious glory, into the humbler shades of life. Down he would go, like a plummet, though he had the Waverley novels disposed like a cork-jacket all around him. His only chance of success is in anonymity, and, of course, if he is to remain for ever anonymous, he gains no fame. We are fully persuaded that Junius was a man of the name of John Smith—a greatly unfortunate man, not fearful of acknowledging his work for any thing that kings or men could do to him, or any other consideration whatever, than simply that he could not endure the idea of exploding all the utility and all the estimation of his piquant writings, by putting such a name upon the title-page.

The non-distinction of the name Dr Brown has been already illustrated, we believe, in an English comic song; and it is very remarkable, that, though there have been many literary and scientific characters bearing this designation, hardly one of them has ever found it possible to gain more than a comparatively local fame. What Doctor is to Brown, Captain is to Campbell—an inseparable adjunct, and one which tends quite as much to take away the individuality it pretends to give. The legion of the Captain Campbells, as they may well be called, might be a staff for the formation of a new army. There is a Captain Campbell in Scotland for every other hundred men. They might colonise a fifth continent. How much good broadcloth how many pairs of respectable Wellington boots, have been worn away upon the limbs of the Captain Campbells, without any one of them having ever been singled out from the rest! No doubt, the Captain Campbells have all been capital fighters in their day: if war has ever done us any good at all, no small portion of that good has been gained by the Captain Campbells. But the misfortune is, that there are too many of them. Their glory is like a chandelier, where no single candle makes any great appear-

ance; whereas, if there were only one of them, he would belike one light in a room, and his usefulness would be at once seen, and prized accordingly. The only advice that could be given to a man of this unfortunate designation, who wanted to signalise himself, would be, that he should commence a tour of the earth in search of a place where there was not another Captain Campbell within ten miles. If such a place there be, let him settle down upon it, with a happy mind, and try what he can do in the way of public service, though it should only be as executioner to the Grand Turk. But if he can nowhere find such a spot of earth, why, then, unless he becomes a kind of shoemaker of Cordova, and quietly poniards all his namesakes that fall in his way, we fear there is no hope for him.

Walter Scott was fortunate in his name. Had he been called Thomas Scott or John Scott, there is a great chance of his never having arrived at the distinction he did. Robert Burns was similarly fortunate. His father luckily changed the family designation from *Burness*, which would never have done as the name of a poet. Vulgar family names, it has to be observed, may be greatly ameliorated by the use of some fine-sounding classic Christian name. For instance, the addition of *Horace* to *Smith*, saves the plainness of the appellation vastly, and makes it fit for a title-page. We recommend fathers of families with common names to attend to this in the christening of their children. We have often regretted the slavishness with which the most of people adhere to old custom in this duty. The first children of the family are regularly called after their grandfathers and grandmothers, and those which follow, after even nearer relations; so that old plain names are perpetuated, and there is no distinguishing one person from another, either now or in future times. We have heard genealogists and lawyers complain much of this stupid system, and express their belief that many fortunes have been lost by it. Surnames are sometimes given as Christian names to children, as Douglas, Stewart, Dundas,

Nelson, &c. This is an intolerably mean custom, and afterwards marks the father as having been a dependent or expectant in some shape of the great man whose name he has adopted. Whenever we hear of a person with a surname for a first name, we have an idea that his father was a footman. A Christian name formed of a complete name of another person, is nearly as bad. A double Christian name, as William Frederick, is now in most cases the result of pure affectation, and is so much in use among characters of questionable respectability, that it ought, if possible, to be discarded. The giving of a name to a child is one of the important trifling duties of human life, and, as such, requires a little more attention than what is usually bestowed on it. Let parents, therefore, take note of these hints, and give their children some really pleasing single Christian name, without regard to whether it was ever before in the family, and holding in view that it will be one which will suit any rank in life, and any distinction which the young individuals may attain.

OLD BACHELORS.

ABSTINENCE from marriage, where it is dictated by prudence, is not only commendable in itself as a safeguard against individual misery, but is entitled to the gratitude of the public, inasmuch as it is, when practised upon a large scale, at least in a country of the *old* world, the preservative of a nation from moral degradation and general distress.

This proposition, however, is of no weight against another which we have been in the habit of hearing from the lips of Miss E. P., an amiable young lady with whom we have had the honour of being acquainted for the last two-and-thirty years—namely, that “it is a *great shame* (such are her emphatic words) for gentlemen who have house-

of their own, and every thing comfortable, that they should not take wives." Perhaps there is a little personal feeling in the remark of our respected friend, seeing that, in her own immediate neighbourhood, there are several middle-aged men, with capital domestic establishments—fit for the accommodation of a family every one of them—who yet, year after year, live dreamily on in single comfortlessness, apparently unobservant that there are ladies in the same predicament, almost next door, whom they might at once render happy, and themselves too, if they only would think of proposing a union of their respective places of residence.

Personal, or not personal, the remark is just: we do think it "a great shame" that some respectable persons of our acquaintance, between the ages of thirty and forty, not to speak of a few a little older, should confine to themselves the enjoyment, such as it is, of a house and fortune every way comfortable, when they at once might increase infinitely their own happiness and also that of others, if they would only open their eyes to the situation of such young ladies as our friend Miss E. P., and obey the grand scripture injunction, which commands them to love their neighbours as themselves. It is truly provoking to see men of this kind pretending to think themselves happy with their starved beef-steak dinners, and their furniture unconscious of ever having been deranged or rumbled by children, all the time that their hearts secretly confess, and every other person knows, how deficient they are in all that gives a real charm to existence.

Like the most of wrong things, resolute celibacy of this kind arises from want of sense; the old bachelor is simply a man who does not see human life in a right point of view, and has no foresight of the future. He has perhaps had a hard struggle with fortune in his early years, and never having been able to get over the fright which poverty gave him in his youth, thinks, even in the midst of plenty, and while life is advancing to its meridian, that he has no room for having any thing to spare for wife or for child,

he is hardly sure of his own wants being supplied for the remainder of his days. The hearts of some men become quite hardened by the prudential maxims upon which they have acted, and which, like the old fortresses of our native country, survive long after there is any occasion for them. Then there is another set—children of fortune—men who have been wandering about all their days, till, in the words of a quaint writer, “they almost forget what a home is.” These, of course, let them settle when they like, or where they like, have an absolute difficulty in comprehending the idea of matrimony, and, even if they could understand it, would fear to tie themselves down, lest they should, some day hereafter, take it into their heads to go out a voyage to Vera Cruz, and be a little bothered with “the childer.” Others are prevented from marrying by lending too serious attention to those silly bugbears about matrimony, which are occasionally the subject of sportive conversation—such, for instance, as the chance of a scolding wife, or of children who turn out ill, and so forth—as if any venture in this life were assured against a risk of some kind or other. There is still another and larger class, whom we shall first describe, and then show how plain a tale will put them down.

This class may be called the Jacobin Bachelors. They repudiate matrimony as a thing calculated to impair their personal liberty. Give us, they cry, the freedom, the independence, of a single life. None of your chains for us. We are the hearty boys, who despise all petticoat government. We must be sole monarchs of ourselves, and have nobody whatsoever to exert the least control over our actions. We'll remain

—free as nature first made man,
Ere the base laws of servitude began,
And wild in woods the noble savage ran.

Stop a little, gentlemen, and let us consider your case. Ma-
thinks your quotation is somewhat infelicitous. The
savage who ran so wildly through these primitive

long since degenerated into peat-moss, was a person, let it always be kept in mind, without breeches. Not a rag of toggery had he of any kind, nor a house to shelter him, and his freedom consisted in a permission to knock every other naked rascal like himself on the head if he could, always with the understanding that he was also to be knocked on the head whenever any other body had the courage or strength to do so. These gentlemen have found a convenience in submitting to certain laws and rules, which no doubt trench dreadfully on freedom, but at the same time conduce much to comfort. In short, men have submitted to the bondage of society. Now, what is matrimony but one of those salutary restraints which sensible people in general have agreed to submit to, in order to increase their mutual happiness? There may be a wild momentary pleasure in an unlimited indulgence of the will; but if it be not reasonable and innocent, it is only momentary. The servitude is incurred, through an impulse of the reason, in order that our pleasure may be prolonged and protected. Thus matrimony becomes a "linked sweetness long drawn out," while there never can be any thing but an irrational and visionary happiness in the sense that we are free from it. Always remember that freedom is not in itself a good—it is only a means of good; and that in cases where it produces a sensible benefit, it is to be appreciated, but in no other. If an exemption from matrimonial control produced either a general or an individual good, we would say, by all means give not thy soft heart to woman. But this is not the case. An universal exemption from matrimony would make the world a wilderness—a particular case of it makes a man a desert. It is an evil in every way it can be taken. What, then, is the use of the abstract freedom, if it be not attended with any of the benefits of freedom? The whole is obviously a mistake of the means for the end; and the Robin Bachelors, we suspect, only fear those unreasoning laws which love imposes, because they are themselves of this

Messieurs the Bachelors have several other fallacies, and as we are resolved to leave them not a leg to stand upon, we shall tumble the whole of these down one after the other. As part of the preceding fallacy about freedom, they conceive that there must be something irksome, if not almost impossible, in the constancy which matrimony requires as one of its cardinal rules. We know the slipperiness and vagrancy of our own minds, say they very cunningly, and we really cannot deliberately undertake a solemn obligation which we know we would soon break.

Now, this is a mere hypocritical shift, for, instead of there being any natural tendency to inconstancy in men, there is an almost insurmountable disposition to constancy; insomuch that they are almost as certain to be constant to what is bad, as to what is good. Constancy forsooth!

Fallacy the second is an idea they have, or pretend to have (for many of their arguments are only assumed), that, by keeping clear of matrimony, they avoid all care, expense, and responsibility, respecting the next generation, and secure an equable and certain happiness in life, even to its close. Poor unhappy men!—it is little they know of the way in which affairs are really to run hereafter. In regard to the first expectation, we would just ask if any one ever knew an old bachelor who was not burdened some way or other with children? Are they not sure, just in proportion to their own childlessness, to have brothers and sisters who bring whole legions of children into the world—which children regularly are cantoned out in alternate plots upon their bachelor uncle, partly to relieve the press of matter at home, and partly from a benevolent desire to provide him with company where-withal to cheer his solitary parlour? Is not “our uncle” appealed to on every occasion of extraordinary expense, such as the fitting out of one of us for India, and the putting another of us to college to study medicine, and so forth? And does he not thus in the long-run dissipate as much of his hard-earned gains as if he had had children of his

own—in which case, moreover, he would have had a little more of the honour to console him for the cost? No, no; tell us not of the *saving* of bachelorship. One way or another, the expense of rearing the next generation is pretty well allocated over society.

But old bachelors are not suffered to escape with simply providing for a troop of nephews and nieces: they very frequently become the prey of their servants, who consider their property as fairly liable to spoliation in every possible shape. Where is the old bachelor—the man who perhaps abstained from marriage to escape being ruled—who is not wholly ruled, three-quarters tormented, and at least half plundered, by a Jenny, or a Betty, or a Mary—some old withered female domestic, who knows his cue, and manages him accordingly? No, no; it is all stuff to talk of there being any saving, or any defence against being ruled in old bachelorhood. If bachelors knew their own interests in time, they would in reality marry in self-defence.

Finally, as to their assurance of happiness to the very close of life, nothing could be more wilfully absurd. If happiness depended alone upon wealth—which it notoriously does not—then it might be secured. But happiness depends upon the cultivation of the social affections, so far as it depends on any thing earthly; and this is the very point which the bachelor has neglected. While more prudent men make provision in middle life for the necessities of age, by rearing an attached and honourable offspring, who at last become a hedge of shelter around him, the poor timid and unforeseeing bachelor thought, that, because he now was contented to enjoy wealth, he would always be so; and, accordingly, he goes on in a state of declared rebellion against nature, till, at length, when it is too late, he finds himself exposed on the common of society, unable to comfort himself with his gold, and totally destitute of what alone could comfort him—a possession which gold could once have cheaply bought, if he had only had the heart to disburse it. Such is the latter part of

the pretended happiness of a single life—*with* wealth, courted by insincere friends, or at least friends in whose sincerity there can be no confidence—*without it*, only the more fully exposed to all the evils of poverty.

THE LIVING AND THE DEAD.

IN London and other large commercial cities, I have always found myself remarkably impressed by one peculiar circumstance—the contrast between the bustling streets, full of living faces and *to-day* objects of all kinds, and the quiet and ancient churchyards which are generally found situated in the midst of them. But five yards, perhaps, of a thoroughfare which for centuries has borne the press of breathing men—where the luxuries and conveniences of life are presented in infinite variety, to attract and fix the attention of the passenger, and where men and women seem so much engaged in the affairs of this world as hardly to be conscious that there is any other—you find the silent and cloistered precinct of the old parish church, paved with the memorials of past generations, who once passed as gaily and thoughtlessly along the ways of the city as those you have just seen, but have long retreated to this narrow place, so near, yet so different from, all their former haunts. The transition, in your own case as a visitor, as well as in theirs who pass in this space from life unto death, is the most sudden and rapid that can be imagined—yet how different all the attributes of the two scenes! In the first, how neat, how fresh, how perfectly *of this world*, every thing looks!—in the other, how dismal, and, in general, how neglected! *Here* you have, at one moment, perhaps the most animated and cheering scene in the world; *there*, at the next instant, your gaze is turned upon the most torpid and gloomy. At one twinkle of the eye, you find life and all its affairs exchanged for death and all its circum-

stances, and pass, at a single step, from the lightest to the gravest of reflections.

I am not aware of any place where this contrast is presented in a more striking manner than it is from an eminence which rises above the north-east suburbs of the great mercantile city of Glasgow. After fluttering for hours through the crowded streets, amidst numberless beings to whom death seems the remotest of all ideas, you are led perhaps to this ornamented hill, whence you command a view of the far-spread town, with its spires peering out here and there, to mark the extent of a waste of houses which would otherwise be hardly distinguishable, while close beneath your feet you see the dark and huge cathedral, surrounded by its extensive and extending cemetery—a city of the living and a city of the dead being thus brought into immediate comparison, and weaving out of their separate influences the most impressive of all lessons.* The place of the living is, as you can see and hear, one of the busiest scenes of men's labours. It contains hundreds of thousands of industrious human beings—all toiling on from morn to eve in their various pursuits, some for mere subsistence, others for loftier objects, but all animated by human motives, and, in general, thinking of nothing in the meantime beyond the bounded horizon of mortal life. How many hearts are there bending anxiously over accoutments, in which their own welfare, and that of all who are dear to them, is concerned! What numberless modes are there assumed, of gaining that surplus of value called profit, on which so much of the comfort of individuals depends! How keenly are even pence, in many cases, there aimed at and longed for—what emo-

* The eminence whence this view is obtained is crowned by a monument to John Knox, the Scottish reformer, and is now converted into a cemetery *orné*, like *Père la Chaise* at Paris, for which purpose it is admirably fitted. In former times, it was covered with dark Scotch firs, which threw a shade of additional gloom over the cathedral burial-ground beneath, but are now succeeded by the shrubs customarily employed in landscape gardening.

tions of the soul, what lightnings of the eye, what contentions between man and man, there arise from considerations of money, and of the almost infinite benefits which money can purchase! The whole vast space is covered to its uttermost nook with human creatures, whom the common doom has compelled, for the sake of bread and other sublunary enjoyments, to narrow their souls to the affairs of lucre, while they every moment tend onward to a fate more glorious or more terrific than imagination can picture, and are even now capable of thoughts and sentiments far above this world. And all this, too, is only a detachment of that trifling section of the human race, called the present generation. On or near the same ground have men toiled and moiled as anxiously as these for many centuries; and what *is* it all, and what will it all come to? To the little fold which we see directly beneath—a space not large enough to contain the lodgings of a hundred living families, but which has received into its bosom thousands after thousands of the more easily accommodated dead, and will in time absorb multitudes as great, and yet never cry enough.

Yes, as the poet sings, “the paths of glory lead but to the grave.” That small spot, of which so few are now thinking as they pace the streets of the busy city, is the real termination of all the journeys they are making. Go they east or west, north or south, be business or be pleasure their immediate object, to this dismal scene must they arrive at last. Not a step do they take which does not bring them nearer to this ultimate point, although it may seem for the time to lead them in a different direction. Every effort which they are making to exalt themselves in this world, only renders them the richer spoil for the daily hecatomb here offered up to death, and in which, sooner or later, they must bear a part. Every improvement which they can make in their circumstances, while they live, gives them but the chance of a more secluded spot in this gathering-place of the departed, or a monument which will

longer continue to tell its unmeaning and unregarded tale. In a few short years, they and all their joys and sorrows, their greatness or their lowliness, will have shrunk into this cold and uncomely scene, while their various walks of business and labour are occupied by others, to whose pursuits a similar bourne will in time be assigned.

It is not perhaps to be desired that reflections of this solemn kind should often or permanently fall upon the minds of men; for if we were to be perpetually brooding over the gloomy view which the end of life presents, we would embitter that life to a degree rendering us quite unfit for the proper management of either our temporal or spiritual concerns. In general, however, human beings, or at least that portion of them called men of the world, are in little danger of suffering from this cause. It is more frequently observed that a constant commerce with the world hardens the heart towards all *beyond* the world—if not also to much *in* the world, regarding which it is desirable that we should keep our feelings awake. It cannot but be salutary, then, for all who are in danger of falling into this insensibility, to turn their minds occasionally to the affairs of mortality, and, seeing the uselessness of all acquisitions after death, the vanity of all terrestrial glory, and the community of destiny which overhangs the various orders of the human race, open their hearts more freely to the claims of their fellow-creatures around them, and otherwise lay up those stores which will stand in good stead when they and the world have alike passed away.

WINDFALLS.

THERE are some medicines and intoxicating draughts which cannot, without extreme danger, be largely used at first. It is only by beginning with small doses, and by gradually increasing them, that the system becomes habituated to their qualities, and in a manner fitted for their reception, until at last the original quantity produces no perceptible effect or excitement, and copious drenchings are undergone with apparent impunity. In the same way that drugs of this kind act upon the body, the possession of wealth operates upon the mind. When money is amassed by slow degrees, by the regular profits of business, the use of it is learnt during the acquisition; but when it plumps upon a man suddenly, and he who yesterday was a hardworking tradesman, obliged to fare frugally, and to be content with coarse clothing, finds himself to-day the master of a fortune capable of supplying a luxurious table, splendid furniture, and rich attire, he is as it were taken by assault, reduced under subjection to a powerful invader, and frightened from his propriety, so as to be incapable of managing affairs discreetly for the future.

He who has formed a resolution to go cautiously and steadily forward in the pursuit he has chosen, accommodates his desires to the station in which it places him. There is no one, indeed, devoid of ambition: and he, like other men, hopes to better himself, and looks forward to enjoyments beyond his present circumstances: but it is by almost imperceptible steps that he advances to attain them. He does not see the full height of the mountain before him, nor pant with eagerness to reach its top; but terraced eminences present themselves successively, and with patient foot he climbs one after another, saving his breath most methodically, although his view does not extend to the next ascent. Far from losing his all upon a cast, he would not risk the merest trifle on *the chances*,

and his is the heart that never fluttered responsive to the most flattering *perhaps*. His last pace is measured with the same steadiness and self-possession that characterised the whole of his progress; and knowing every inch of ground over which he has passed, he is prepared to recede, if it should be necessary, with no less composure. Such is the character of the prudent man of business—unwearied industry being its strongest feature. All acknowledge him to be clear-headed, and many load him with the imputation of being also cold-hearted; but this is very frequently a mistake. He knows how he has got every penny he possesses, and he never parts with the smallest sum, without being assured of a good and sufficient cause for the outlay. He is not wanting in the common kindnesses and charities of life; on the contrary, he devotes the whole of his time and talents to the acquisition of means by which he may confer benefits on all who are connected with him—but they are every one sober unostentatious benefits, distributed considerably from a sense of duty, and not from any high-flown notions of generosity. By steady attention to the concerns of trade, he makes himself the stay of many industrious families, who in his service are sure of employment, and equally sure of their wages. He whose hand gives liberally to the poor is blessed; but doubly blessed is he who enables them to live without depending upon casual bounty.

The man who looks to lucky turns in trade, and makes bold ventures, is sometimes as successful as his neighbour who plods on in its regular routine; but he seldom employs his advantages so wisely for himself, and so beneficially for others. He is of a sanguine temperament, and has accustomed himself to think that money is only to be made by fortunate hits. Excitement and stir present to him charms that are irresistible; so he takes care to devise and execute a number of schemes, sufficient to keep him constantly upon the tenterhooks of expectation. They often fail; but he is not discouraged. Persuading himself that his

plans were the best possible, and conducted in the most judicious manner, he attributes their discomfiture solely to casualties which nobody could have foreseen. "If it had not been that that fellow who bought my last consignment from ——— was a villain, I should at this moment have been in possession of a fortune of L.30,000," says the disappointed speculator; and he speaks truly: but he overlooks the circumstance that he sold his goods so very advantageously, that it would have been apparent to any one, not blinded by an over-eagerness of gain, that the purchaser had little intention of paying the price. A person with better regulated notions would aim rather to dispose of a great number of commodities, at moderate returns, than of a few at a large profit; but for this sure and liberal system of dealing, the daring commercial adventurer entertains a sovereign contempt; a small advantage he does not think worth accepting, and accordingly his transactions are all of a hazardous kind, either issuing in a dead loss or in enormous gains. By this hap-hazard species of traffic, an immense fortune is occasionally accumulated, and may be considered in the light of a windfall to its owner, as much as if it had presented itself in the shape of an unexpected legacy. It comes upon him as unprepared to use it in moderation, and is for the most part as injudiciously squandered. Indeed, in whatever way it comes, the result is nearly the same.

"What an unfortunate wretch I am," exclaims he who finds himself the holder of an unsuccessful lottery-ticket, "to pitch upon No. 999, when, if I had taken the one above it, I should have got the L.20,000 prize!" Now, mark the bad logic of the man: he calls himself unfortunate in not selecting No. 1000, as if he were certain it would have turned out a prize *if he had held it*. But so willing is he to interpret chances in his own favour, that a doubt on this exceedingly problematical point never enters his head; and he considers himself to have been so very close upon gaining a large sum, that he is sure of it the next time he

makes the trial. Well, perhaps he *does* succeed the next time, or the next, or the time after; and how does this vast influx of wealth find and affect him?—It finds him very much in need of it, and very eager to wallow in it; and ten to one, he is soon in a worse condition than ever. This suddenly acquired wealth does not seem to have the same blessing with it that generally accompanies the gains of patient industry, or of an honest ingenuity, exerted from day to day. Sudden wealth may be compared to a tornado, which produces nothing but havoc and desolation; the slow earnings of industry to the silent dews, by whose influence the face of nature is beautified, and vegetation invigorated and refreshed.

The above arguments bear with full force upon the life of the gambler, who is simply a person given up to delusive hopes of acquiring wealth without working for it. In general, we find moral writers and dramatists, in their endeavours to check this vice, go no farther than to show the horrible results which are apt to spring from its indulgence. It might be advantageous also to explain the rational principles upon which gambling is a worse means of endeavouring to obtain money than an industrious course of life. To assume a language which will be intelligible to those who are addicted to it, it is attended with a *worse chance* of ending in the desired result. If twenty persons are engaged in one street, each in his own honest business, it is certain that some profit will be made amongst them, so that most of them, at least, will be able to exist without coming upon their capital. But if twenty persons be engaged as industriously in gambling, it is certain that no profit will be made amongst them—on the contrary, money will be lost in paying for the rooms, and for the materials of the sport. Supposing the twenty persons were kept by themselves, and that they began with a considerable stock of money amongst them, they would by and bye find themselves reduced to penury, by reason of this constant drain upon their resources. Now, if money cannot be made by any com-

munity of gamblers among themselves, what hope is there, except in that vanity and self-love which speaks delusively to every bosom, that an individual will enrich himself? Evidently none whatever. Thus, gambling in every case where it does not suppose a simpleton to be pillaged, is proved a mere fallacy; while, in cases where that is supposed, it is the meanest, because the safest of robberies. In no point of view can there be any advantage in this course of life—for if wealth be lost, it produces all the usual evils of that contingency; if it be gained, it never thrives, and is apt to be again quickly lost, either by play, or by irregular and expensive living. Upon the whole, while some must be greater losers than others, there is no *general chance* in favour of the gambler, as there is in favour of the honest and industrious man—he is almost certain of being, in the long-run, worse than when he began. He may be compared, indeed, to a merchant who exposes his capital to an almost absolute certainty of being impaired, by assuming a line of speculations in which the chance of loss is invariably and palpably greater than the chance of gain. The only individual who can thrive by this unhappy vice is the person who keeps the gaming-house; the players, as a whole, *must* be losers.

Of all classes of society, the young are the most apt to give themselves up to a practice of longing for windfalls. The male human being, from six to sixteen, is constantly dreaming of pots of money found in the earth, or of large fortunes made in foreign adventure, after the manner of Whittington with his cat. From sixteen to four-and-twenty he dreams of handsome fortunes made by the simple and rather agreeable process of taking a handsome woman to wife; and he is constantly on the outlook for such a chance of placing himself, as it is called, upon his feet. Others dream of legacies from rich and hitherto unheard-of uncles, who will be dying some of these days in India, fifty years after they had been given up by their relations for lost. *All are more or less* taken up by the idea of ready-made

fortunes, which are to save them the trouble of making one for themselves ; and in this gasping and grasping hope of becoming suddenly enriched, they spend perhaps the time and energies which ought to be directed to better objects. We would warn our young readers against giving themselves up to these vain phantasies. The proportion of those who have been so fortunate, as it is called, as to fall into the possession of windfalls, is so very small as compared with those who do not, that it ought never to be taken into account in our calculations as to the means of providing ourselves with a subsistence. If we would just reflect for a moment upon what the most of us are at our outset in life—bare, unlicked creatures, with merit all to be proved, if it really exists at all, but most probably it does not exist—merely individuals in the great herd of the beardless, none of whom seem any different from the rest—we would never flatter ourselves that there was any chance of fortune singling *us* out as her own peculiar favourites, or of our gaining any thing whatsoever, till we had somehow asserted our right to it. It is nothing but an overweening self-love, and a blindness to the degree of estimation in which, while as yet untried, we are likely to be held by the rest of mankind, that leads us into this error ; and he, for certain, has the best chance of quickly investing himself with the good things of Fortune, who is soonest cured of so fatal and bewildering a delusion.

TOM BRIMS.

It appears to be a prevailing impression, in consequence of the strain of our fictitious literature, that there is no pathos any where, except in either very refined society, or among a rural population. No one seems to think that there can ever be any sentiment in the situation of a shopkeeper, or that feeling, any more than friendship, is to be found in

trade This notion, I am persuaded, has arisen solely from the circumstance, that poets and story-writers, finding some difficulty in managing the current of a pathetic tale amidst the commonplace details of business, have invariably looked elsewhere for characters and scenery: it is entirely a matter of literary convenience. Thus, though we see every day the most striking turns of fortune in mercantile life, accompanied by distresses of the most touching kind, such is nevertheless the habit into which our reading has thrown us, that we would be apt to think it very odd if a tragedy, or even the simplest sentimental tale, were attempted to be woven from such a tissue.

Though not insensible to the danger of going right against the stream of popular taste, I am induced to do so on the present occasion, in order to commemorate an individual whose fate made a deep impression upon me in my earlier years, and in whose story, referring though it does to mere trade, I cannot help believing that the public will, like myself, feel somewhat interested. No tale could be simpler in its pathos, or less involved in its parts; and yet I never can think of it without a degree of sympathising sadness, which might now-a-days be refused to the most lordly and the most complicated sorrows of the stage.

Thomas Brims had been reared, I believe, as a traveller for a *house* in Yorkshire, which dealt largely in leather caps and braces. When I first knew him, he was a handsome middle-aged and middle-sized man, always dressed in the very extreme of the prevailing fashion, yet with an easiness of manner which is not often found in carefully dressed men. It was alleged of Brims that he had been such an exquisite in his earlier years, as to sleep in doe-skin gloves for the purpose of whitening his hands. But this was perhaps a fiction. No man ever took the head of the table in a *travellers' room* with less exceptionable pretensions to the honour than he. Clever, well-bred, good-humoured, and an admirable teller of stories, he seemed to possess every qualification for that important post; and it

was accordingly acceded to him on all occasions, even though there might be present an individual who had been longer upon the road. When a little elevated after dinner, Brims became so delightful a companion, that gentlemen who had intended to call upon a few customers in the evening, totally forgot their purpose—forgot time, business, and every thing—and sat still, enchained, it might be said, by the social spirit of their preses. Brims was reputed to be one of the cleverest salesmen in England; and it is more than probable, that, if the same abilities had been devoted to a learned profession, or to some species of state-service, he would have risen to considerable honours.

Such was Brims when I first knew him. He was then in the habit of annually visiting the country town in which I resided; and as my father was one of the traders with whom he did business, I had ample opportunities of observing the character of the man. He was, however, an object of interest to many besides those with whom he was any way connected in business. His neat gig and spirited horse were recognised as they entered the town, even before his own person was distinguished; and when he was alighting at the door of the inn, the equipage was surrounded by a far greater crowd of boys than what was usually gathered at the advent of any other stranger. "Brim's is come! Brim's is come!" was echoed from mouth to mouth; and in ten minutes the fact was known to the whole population. Happy was the boy who, from his acquaintance with the waiter, was permitted to carry any of Brims's bags or boxes into the house; and delighted above all measure was he, who, from his being highest in the good graces of the ostler, was entrusted with the mighty honour of taking Brims's horse to the water. The style in which Brims moved, and the success with which he pursued his trade, altogether gave him, at this period, the appearance of a happy and prosperous man.

Some years of adverse fortune ensued, both with my own family and with Brims. With the causes of our own mis-

fortunes I am but too well acquainted ; but I never could learn, nor even guess, how so expert a man as Brims should have sunk, in the meridian of life, from a line of employment for which he seemed so admirably qualified. After having lost sight of him for several years, we met him in another country town—one very near the Scottish capital—to which we had been induced to remove in the hope of bettering our circumstances. Brims, to our surprise, was also resident there. He lived with his wife and his boys (so he termed three grown-up lads) in a small and rather mean-looking house, at no great distance from our own. Eight years had wrought a change in the prompt and sprightly traveller ; yet, while his countenance wanted its former sparkle, his clothes were still almost as good and as neat as ever, and even, amidst the details of a very humble household, he carried as much of the air of a gentleman as in his better days. He was also engaged in the same business as formerly ; but, alas, upon what a different scale ! Instead of selling his wares in large quantities, and over the country at large, he now employed himself and his boys in manufacturing them with their own hands, and sought no more extensive market than what was supplied by some of the inferior retail dealers in Edinburgh. Once or twice a-week he dressed himself in his trim though rather overbrushed suit of black, and, with a neat leather-covered parcel under his arm, walked to the city—even the stage-coach being above his resources—where he busied himself for the day in making sales ; and I have been given to understand, that, on such occasions, he displayed exactly the same persuasiveness of manner, and the same eloquence in describing his goods, as he had ever done in his better days, when selling leather caps by the thousand instead of the dozen. The contrast, however, was that of a blood hunter reduced to the cart, which, though it may carry a somewhat higher head than the common workhorse, yet is every whit as stayed in its demeanour, and as thoroughly reconciled to its situation.

In the course of time, some changes took place in Brims's little household. His wife—a genteel, quiet Englishwoman—died; and his two elder sons, fretting at the hopeless drudgery to which they were bound by their father, left him to seek their own fortune in the wide world. He suffered alike severely from these calamities, yet hardly permitted a complaint to escape him. He was now left alone with his youngest son Alfred, a tiny and delicate youth, whose very beauty showed that he was not long for this world. His little manufactory was now still smaller than ever; but it was enough for the demand. Leather caps about this time began to be disused, on account of the popularity which Highland bonnets acquired from the glory of the Scottish regiments at Waterloo. Even braces, as Brims used to remark pathetically, appeared to be less used than formerly, insomuch that it was a kind of wonder to him how the inexpressibles of mankind were kept up at all. He now seldom went to Edinburgh oftener than once in the ten days; and I used to remark, with much regret, that his neat leather parcel was sometimes at his return not altogether discharged of its contents. Still Alfred was sure to have his tea (his favourite and only indulgence) warm for him when he arrived, and, even amidst something approaching to penury, he appeared to be content.

There was something beyond measure affecting in the attachment of these two lonely beings to each other. Poor Brims, after the loss of his wife and the departure of his elder sons (of whom he never afterwards heard), appeared to cling only the more fondly to Alfred, who was now, it might be said, the sole stay and hope of his old age. He felt also those fond terrors which so readily possess a parent's heart respecting a delicate child; and fear gave a convulsive energy to that embrace in which love disposed him to hold this fragile plant. On the other hand, Alfred, with a degree of sense and feeling beyond his years, deplored the unfortunate circumstances of his father, and seemed eagerly anxious, by every kind of personal atten-

tion, as well as by taking a full share of his labours, to compensate the desolation of his age. Neither had any other object on earth to care for ; each, of course, gave his heart entirely to the other : and if even opposite natures are forced sometimes to coalesce for defence against a common danger, it may be imagined how these kindred souls blent together, for mutual support against solitude and sorrow.

Time wore on, and Brims's trade always got worse and worse, till at length he declared it to be hardly possible for him and his son to earn as much as could support them in even the most parsimonious manner. In the increased necessity of labour, he endeavoured to take as much upon himself as possible, in order to save the slender frame of Alfred ; while, with the view of continuing certain comforts which the health of that individual rendered more necessary than ever, he pinched so much from his own daily necessities as almost left him in the feigned condition of the camelion. But for the self-denial of his son, who adopted every means in his power to lessen the toils and improve the comforts of his father, he must have speedily destroyed his own health. There was now a generous rivalry between the two, which to labour most, and which to require least personal indulgence ; each endeavouring, as it were, to arrest the busy hand of the other, and to force into the mouth of his companion the hard-earned morsel which was fairly due to himself. At length the gentle Alfred sunk fairly beneath the premature hardships to which he was condemned, and his father knew the appalling fact, that, while there was still some chance of life, if relaxation, exercise, change of air, and an improved regimen, could be afforded to the patient, there was none otherwise, and, of course, as matters stood, none at all.

As the only individuals in the place whom Brims had known in his better days, he selected us at this time to receive the recital of his sorrows. What gave, he said,

the most poignant wound to his mind, was the unfeeling coldness with which a wealthy brother-in-law had lately treated an application he had made for relief. This individual was not only wealthy, but had no one dependent on him; and yet, such was his reluctance to part with any part of his hoards, that even the small sum necessary to try an experiment for the health of his nephew had been refused. Whether the case might stand exactly upon the grounds described by Brims, we could not tell; if so, it was certainly among the hardest we had ever known: but probably there was some cause of wrath against our unfortunate friend, with which his self-love would not permit him to make us acquainted.

As might have been expected, the young man declined slowly, but surely, towards the grave, notwithstanding all that we, and other persons interested in him, could do to stay his progress. I was present on the evening when he died, and never shall forget the picture of human woe which the surviving parent exhibited on that occasion. The dying youth was stretched on a little bed, in a meanly furnished room, with no other attendant besides his father than a poor old woman who lived in another part of the same house, and had come in to inquire if she could be of any use. Close over his pale and death-like countenance hung his father, whose disordered dress and exhausted look showed but too plainly the extremity to which watchfulness and anxiety had reduced him. For hours the young man had not showed the least sign of consciousness; and the doctor, when called away, some time before, to attend a more hopeful patient, had pronounced that he could not live two hours longer. The father, however, was still unsatisfied—what parent, in such circumstances, can ever be so?—and was every now and then bringing forward a spoonful of medicine to pour upon the parched lips of his son, in doing which he generally asked the unavailing question, “Alfred, my dear boy, do you not know your father?”

Just before the last fatal moment, the sun came round and shone into the apartment, and, in obedience to a motion from Mr Brims, I went to the window to close a part of the shutter. How strange, I thought, to see this cheerful light gilding the objects of a death-chamber with as much brilliancy as if they belonged to some splendid and festive scene! Before I could accomplish what I was about, the increase of light seemed to break up for a moment the slumber of the dying youth, and he cast a hesitating and languid look towards the window. "Oh, leave the shutter as it is," said the father eagerly, as if afraid to deprive his child of any thing that could be supposed, even at this last darkening hour, to give him any pleasure. It was only for a moment, however, that the eye remained open to this new impression. It closed immediately; and in a minute after, one convulsive movement in the youth; and a burst of overpowering grief from the father, informed me that death had done his work.

Other females from the neighbourhood now came crowding in, and were permitted by Brims to perform the last offices to his son. That night he was pressed by my father, in the most earnest and friendly manner, to take up his abode with us; but nothing could prevail upon him to quit his own desolate house, and we were accordingly obliged to leave him, though not till we had seen another room arranged properly for his reception, and provisions laid in for his use. Our attention, alas! was unnecessary. Brims was found next morning stretched lifeless beside the body of his son—his own bed unpressed—his meat untasted. Upon the table which had been spread for him lay a scrap of paper, on which were inscribed the words, "It is too late." Nothing else was to be learned, except that a spirit, deserted by all the objects of its affection, and oppressed with misfortunes too heavy to be endured, had sunk beneath its griefs, and fled to rejoin all it held dear in another and better world.

MEN ABOUT TOWN.

IN every large city there are a few single gentlemen who move about among what is called the best society, and are every where received as men of proper style and character, who, nevertheless, have no real pretensions to the honours they receive, and are in fact mere adventurers. If a young man have only such an income as will supply him with a little pocket-money, and be possessed of agreeable manners and a prepossessing exterior, let him but get into a single coterie in a fashionable city, and he immediately makes his way through the whole, and may live for years afterwards as a guest at the tables of the great. The grand essential for this kind of life, is to have nothing known about one. Just be a well-dressed and well-bred stranger; and if you are seen at one place, you are asked to another, whence you are asked to a third, and so on to a fourth, no one ever thinking further about you than simply that you are the young man whom we saw at such a place, and who took out Miss Young to dance. Fortunately for those who choose to live in this manner, there are always multitudes of silly women, the wives of men of good income, who, in their anxiety to show off and advance themselves in society, are perpetually giving parties, to which no one is invited on the sacred principles of friendship and hospitality, but multitudes are drawn in to eat and drink for considerations altogether different—chiefly that they may be impressed with a respectful notion of the giver of the entertainment. Such shows might almost be considered as given for the especial benefit of the individuals alluded to, who can always manage to get invitations to them, and are the only individuals to whom such exhibitions of viands and liquor do any real good.

The individual who writes the present paper was once “so far left to himself” as to spend several months amidst the heartless frivolities which characterise a winter of

fashionable life in the Scottish, as in all other capitals. In the course of the season, he had opportunities of observing the tactics of many young men about town, as they are called, some of whom were occasionally put to serious difficulties in the purchase of a single pair of white kid gloves, though they appeared, in company, as perfectly accustomed to the luxury of a full purse as if they had never known the reverse. There was one in particular in whom I had much reason to be interested, as will be observed from the adventure I am about to relate. This was a Mr Hopper, an Englishman of between thirty and forty, who had been fluttering about town for a dozen years, as I was informed, and yet no one knew any more about him than just that he was Mr Hopper. Hopper was a polished and most agreeable man, and, having seen much of the world, possessed really considerable powers of entertainment, in so much, that at the dullest and worst-assorted parties, a relief was experienced from his conversation. He was supposed to be out four times a-week at an average, throughout the season; and though no instance of his giving a treat in return was upon record, many of these invitations were to the same house. There was even a worse peculiarity in Hopper, which in many persons would have had a very unfavourable effect, but in his case seemed to be pardoned for the sake of his better properties. This was his coarse and uncultivated-looking appetite. While all others were eating with the deliberation proper to good society, and talking as much as possible between every bite, Hopper devoured his victuals with a rapidity and a silence alike odious, and never brought out a remark worth listening to till his mouth was quite disengaged from what he seemed to think a more serious business. In fact, Hopper was universally cried out upon as a gormandiser.

The adventure just alluded to was a dinner which Hopper once gave to *me*—he who had never given a dinner or any thing else before, and who was supposed by all who knew him to be incapable of giving dinners. An enter-

tainment that took place under such remarkable circumstances, may well be expected to excite some curiosity in the reader, and I shall therefore describe it in the most minute and faithful manner possible.

What it was that inspired Hopper with the desire of having me to dine with him, I never could exactly make out. Perhaps it was a vague report, to which I gave no credit myself, that I was about to be married to a great heiress then in vogue ;—possibly he might reckon upon an invitation, at no distant date, to — Hall, in return for his own. Whatever was the motive, one thing is certain : it could only be from some hope of turning the affair to his own advantage. At first, I must confess, I was rather startled by the event. I saw that he was a mere man about town, and wished to have as little to do with him as possible. On second thoughts, however, I resolved to go, just to see what kind of dinner such a man would give.

During the interval between the invitation and the appointed day, I found myself completely possessed by speculations on this latter point. What kind of dinner, thought I, is to be expected from a man who never gave a dinner before? Will it be good, or bad, or simply indifferent? I tried it all the ways, but at last fairly made up my mind to this : that, when the man was making a plunge, as it is called, he would do it to some purpose. The dinner would be splendid, even although there should be nobody there but myself.

Accordingly, on the evening of the great day, I moved towards the lodgings of Mr Hopper, in the full hope, like the dog invited by his friend to sup, of regaling myself at one of the most exquisite banquets that the world had ever produced. I had that day refused lunch at three places, that my appetite might be in proper order for so rich a treat ; and having walked a good deal without any refectation since breakfast, it may be guessed that I was considerably disposed to do justice to whatever should be set before me. On arriving at my friend's lodgings, which were for the

time in a rather shabby cottage near Newhaven, I was informed by him, that, from some misunderstanding with his landlady, dinner would not yet be ready for half an hour; and he proposed that we should while away the time by a walk on the beach. To this I agreed, and, by so doing, gave the last fine edge to an appetite already almost as keen as a razor. However, thought I, there can be no doing too much justice to such an entertainment. In the course of our walk, the conversation somehow turned upon desserts. He was a great critic, I found, in this branch of gastronomical knowledge. He had eaten all kinds of desserts, in all quarters of the world, and, said he in conclusion, "I have got into such a habit of devouring these fine things, that I never dine, even by myself, without something of the kind." Well, thought I, this is better promise still—the dinner, to be sure, is something long a-coming; but when it does come, what will it not be?

At length, in a perfect agony of appetite, I was led back to his lodgings, where we found, in the first place, a very neatly spread table, but as yet no viands: neither was there any wine as yet visible above the horizon. After a little farther conversation, Hopper went to a cupboard, and brought out a black bottle, which he placed very carefully near his own plate. By and bye, the honest woman of the house brought in a small covered dish, which proved to be of curried mutton-chops, with another containing boiled rice. This gave, of course, a revolution to my expectations, and informed me, that, after all, it was to be only a bachelor's, or, to describe it more emphatically, a lodging-house dinner. However, I still thought there might be a rough sufficiency in the affair. In this, alas, how much was I deceived! The cover being removed from the chops, disclosed three small pieces about as many inches square, piled above each other, and a small quantity of sauce floating at the bottom. "Now," said Mr Hopper, "here are curried chops to begin with—the best dish in the world: Will you be helped to any?" Though

I thought the question rather superfluous, I answered in the affirmative, and was served with the least of the three pieces—scrupulously selected by my entertainer—without any sauce ; after which I observed him, to my infinite consternation, turn over all that remained, sauce included, into his own plate, along with a large proportion of the rice. He then helped me to one spoonful of the latter dish, and desiring me to make a hearty dinner, fell to in his usual *absorbed* manner, never taking his eye off his plate till it was empty. The two bites which I found upon my piece of chop were of course soon dispatched, and I was then left to survey the proceedings of my entertainer, who, to do him justice, did not keep me long waiting. Having finished his own part of the first course, he pulled a bottle of common beer, and having helped himself to a full tumbler, which he immediately drank off, poured out half a tumbler for me, and then emptied the remainder into his own glass, to stand as a stock for himself. The landlady now brought in a dish of fricasseed chops, consisting, like the former, of three small pieces ; and having in like manner ascertained that I was disposed to eat of this meat also, handed me the *least* of the trio ; after which, as before, he turned over the whole into his own plate, and soon became as abstracted as ever in the great business of devouring. He awoke at last, some time after I had finished my second pair of bites, to ask me to take a glass of wine. I held out my glass, and received it back about two-thirds full of port, which he poured from the black bottle above alluded to. He then filled his own, and drank it off ; then filled one more, and drank that off ; and once more again, and drank that off too ; and then—and then—it was evident the bottle was empty. The landlady now appeared, to ask if any more chops were required, to which he answered in a direct negative, without seeming to think it in the least necessary that I should be consulted in the matter. Of course, I had to abandon myself to my fate. Dinner was over.

My entertainer now talked of liquors. "What kind of wines do you like?" said he, naming Champagne, Burgundy, Hochheimer, and many others, with as much confidence as if he had had specimens of them all in his cellar. I spared the man—though he did not deserve it—if indeed it could be supposed that such a person would have been at a loss to parry whatever request had been made to him. I said, that, when dining in this quiet kind of way, I generally preferred a little spirits and water to any kind of wine. "Oh, very well," said he, catching me like wild-fire, "I can give you the best whisky in the world—a most particular article—the king never knew of it, I believe—got it sent me last August from the Highlands by my friend —, member, by the bye, for —shire, which is rather too bad"—here he put his finger on the side of his nose; "but all the better for that, you know." A solitary bottle of whisky was accordingly brought out from the cupboard (I could swear it had no companion), and we began to liquidate part of it into punch. By way of giving him a fright, I made a large and strong tumbler, the effect of which was seen within the first quarter of an hour, in his beginning to talk of his inordinate propensity to tea and coffee. "Do you know," said he, "I am a most extravagant dog in tea and coffee. I keep all kinds of tea, and, indeed, chiefly live upon it when I am alone. Sometimes in summer I can take no dinner at all, but just have a cup of tea and a biscuit. I am fond of green—oh, I do doat upon green. It is the best tea in the world. For common use, however, bohea is a respectable tea. I like bohea very well, I must say. It is less of a drug, and cheers fully as much. Oh, you cannot think what a tea-drinker I am!" By and bye, observing that I was less severe upon the whisky than he expected, he dropped the conversation about tea and coffee; and, on a servant coming in and laying down a cup on a side-table, motioned it away, as if he had felt it to be a mal-apropos idea. I soon after relieved him from all further anxiety about either tea or toddy, by tak-

ing my leave, alleging that the illness of a friend who lived with me made it necessary that I should be soon home. I could see, from his suddenly warmed manner, that he had never till now truly enjoyed my company. His parting expressions were the most cordial of the whole evening.

As I afterwards crawled to a tavern, to satisfy my hunger by a real dinner, I could not help deploring that a man of Hopper's talents and accomplishments should prefer living such a life, when, by sinking a little, and applying himself to honest industry, he might render himself much more truly respectable, and, I should suppose, much more truly happy. The life of this man, thought I, is a perpetual insincerity: it is a visionary show from first to last. And what is gained by such a departure from reality?—only an equivocal kind of countenance from persons almost as hollow and deceptious as himself, and a somewhat larger share of certain indulgences, which, however, are the most paltry and the most transient on earth.

"MIGHT, COULD, WOULD, OR SHOULD."

It is known, or ought to be known, to all persons, that there are two departments in a common verb, called the Indicative and the Subjunctive Moods. When we imply that a thing is done, was done, or will be done, we speak in the *indicative*—that is, we indicate or simply notify some transaction of which we are enabled to speak with the confidence arising from exact knowledge. But when we mean to say that such and such a thing may be done, or might be done, or will have been done when a certain other thing permits—when we speak, in short, in "if's and an's," or in a faint hesitating way, as if we did not like to come to the point—then we are using the *subjunctive mood*, which is so called because some condition is always supposed to be sub-

joined to the act of which we are speaking. In this latter mood there is a tense called the pluperfect, which is used when we say that any one might, could, would, or should have done any kind of thing.

Now, this pluperfect tense of the subjunctive mood, this "might, could, would, or should," is a grievous bore, in-somuch that we could almost wish it to be drummed out of the English grammar altogether. It is something like intentions, as contrasted with deeds, frequently supplanting an honest and useful indicative, and, with not the tenth part of the merit of that respectable mood, carrying off all the glory due to it alone. People have a way of saying that a man of words and not of deeds is like a garden full of weeds ; but this principle is in reality very imperfectly acknowledged or acted upon. We may have a kind of abstract notion that deeds are better than words ; yet did we, for our own part, never see, when the actual deeds of one man were contrasted with those which we suppose *might have been done* by another—when all that one friend has been honestly able to do was measured against what we expect from some other who has only been talking of doing it—we never saw, we say, that the former got any fair degree of credit, compared with what was gratuitously bestowed upon the latter. The subjunctive generally carries it hollow from the indicative—the measure of the reason in the one case being apparently no match for the measure of the imagination in the other. This is certainly a most discouraging thing for the gentlemen who *do*, and ought to be put a stop to in this and every other well-regulated state. It is really too bad, when one takes the trouble to act upon the indicative in every thing, that the honour due to him should be carried off by the lazy gentlemen of the subjunctive, who insolently tell us that they could if they had a mind, and whom we slavishly hold up as able to do any thing, merely because we have never yet had any specimen of their abilities whereby to judge more correctly.

Every class of persons, we believe, could recite the in-

juries they have suffered in this way—for let any person on earth do his very best, ay, perhaps the very best that *could* be done, there will be some other body, who, from merely holding his peace, and perhaps looking a little grave, is generally believed to be able to do a great deal better. This greatness in the subjunctive is a pest every where: it rules the court, the camp, the grove. Perhaps, however, it is nowhere so rife as in literature—that is to say, if a thing can be said to be in literature, which, it is only supposed, might, could, would, or should be in literature. Be it understood anyhow, that there is a class of gentlemen, of good education or otherwise, who, though they never be detected in so much as a letter in a local newspaper signed Civis, being merely suspected of literary habits, and having a rather plausible way of pronouncing upon things, get far more credit among all who know them, than almost any existing author who comes plump down with his half-dozen volumes in the year, thereby affording the whole community a means of judging of his pretensions. If you speak of any well-known author, a certain degree of merit is acknowledged; but "ah, sir," ten to one this is added, "he is nothing to our acquaintance H——; there's a fellow for you—never would publish any thing though—great loss to the world—he is the man!" Now, in all probability H—— is nothing but a heavy proser, who never felt the least impulse of the diviner kind of mind all his days; but what is that? There is nothing known against him. Every body is safe in praising *him*, for he has given out no specimen of his ingenuity to pick exceptions with, and the person whom you are endeavouring to inspire with as great a fallacy as yourself, must just take it in and make the best of it. Very different it is when you speak of an indicative man; you must cruise with some caution there, or you will be met in the teeth, perhaps, with a declaration that he whom you admire is a goose—a sentence which cannot but be accepted as reflecting equal discredit upon the admirer and the admired. It is this that

gives such a secure celebrity to the gentlemen of the subjunctive.

There is one other department of human life, in which we have observed this most unrighteous *mood* to have particular sway. Our readers may have observed, that, when any gentleman takes a wife, all his friends are a good deal concerned to know whether his choice be really a worthy one or not. If it be supposed inferior—and almost all matches are thought to be so in some respects, on either the one side or the other, or on both—then it is lamented, and the gentleman is thought to have been so far a fool. On the other hand, there are some men who seem so excessively fastidious, have such delicate and lofty notions about the sex, and linger, and consider, and look about them so long, that they almost seem as if they were too good for marriage under any circumstances. Oh, thinks every body, a man of such taste, such discernment, and who has so many advantages to bring to the matrimonial state—what a choice he must make! Mark here how the subjunctive rises triumphant above the indicative—how *may take a wife* shines pre-eminent over *has taken a wife*! Ten to one, however, it is all gratuitous folly, arising from our propensity to make the creatures of the imagination brighter and more golden than the creatures of our optics. We compare the human, and therefore frail, being, whom the indicative man has made his wife, with the faultless monster whom we think alone proper for the subjunctive, and, as a matter of course, the subjunctive gets the preference. Wait, however, till Mr Subjunctive has at last—for there is no enduring perfection on earth—condescended to assume the indicative; wait till he, too, some day take a wife. Then, alas, does he suffer as Mr Indicative formerly suffered. His choice is found, like every other body's, to be liable to some exceptions, greater or less; and, like the god who was thrown from heaven upon the earth, and was crippled by the fall, he is not only taken down from his former high character, but he is made rather shabbier

than he would naturally be, in consequence of the declension.

The moral of all this must have been already so fully perceived by our readers, that it will not require to be more than touched upon. Away, we say, with all *supposed* merit—away with all greatness of which we can only say that it *might, could, would, or should* be! Such flattery of the indolent or the incapable—for both of these kinds of people are objects of it—is a direct robbery of the active and the ingenious, and must be alike injurious to public and to private interests. The public may depend upon it, that the express tendency of any thing that is *in* a man, is to come *out*, and that the simplest inference that can be made from *nothing coming out*, is, that *nothing is in*. That part, for instance, of the human race, who sit for hours in a company and never open their lips, are not thus silent from the magnitude of their ideas finding, as it were, the aperture of expression too narrow, or the audience unworthy of their exertions. In general they are neither more nor less than idealess men. We have heard of one who once sat in a company of his brother agriculturists, in the house of the original of Dandie Dinmont, till three o'clock in the morning, without ever saying one word till that last moment, when, it being urged by most of the company that the bowl, already seventeen times replenished, should be replenished no more, he burst out with—"Od, I think we wadna be the werr [worse] o' another ane." Now, it is evident that this speech, luminous and eloquent as it partly was, could be the result of nothing but the singular emergency of the occasion—the imminent fear of losing hold of the liquor to which his soul was glued—the great, the overmastering love of "another bowl." So is it always with these silent horrors, as a clever but somewhat talkative friend of ours terms them, and also with the gentlemen who "could write capital books if they chose." Never do you, my public, so long as you live, listen again with complacency to the grammati-

cal formula, "might, could, would, or should." It is nothing but a bag of wind, alike empty whether expanded or collapsed. Hoard all your gracious smiles for Messrs Do and Did, who are the only gentlemen of substantial merit that ever seek for honours at your hands.

FAMILY AFFECTIONS.

In the chequered and often weary pilgrimage of life, there is nothing, after religion, which yields so uniform and un-failing a measure of comfort, as the affections springing from ties of blood. To all men we are in some measure brothers : there are general sympathies which bind the whole race together as one family, and others which, uniting larger or smaller parties, and inspiring them with common objects, form solid brotherhoods and corporations, for general and individual advantage. In all these unions, however, the binding sympathies are of a vague nature, compared to those which knit together the little circle of a domestic hearth. It is there alone that the reasons for union exceed in number and strength the reasons for disunion, and there alone that we may hope to find an attachment, which will be alike ready to resist and to consult a sense of interest. In the world at large, the sympathies of those around us are only to be roused by a particular exigency, and we might live for ever without acquiring a single friend. In our homes, on the contrary, every man feels as if he were hedged round by a faithful and devoted body-guard, whose eyes are as beacons to guide and welcome him to their hearts, and whose best offices can only be withheld when they are either repressed by coldness or eminently undeserved. In all spheres of life this is the same, and the poor man, though doomed, perhaps, to suffer under the contumely of the proud, finds as much esteem and affection in his own humble circle, and is thereby as much comforted

and supported, as if he possessed all the boasted advantages of fortune.

Since such are the blessings which Almighty Providence has conferred upon us through the medium of family ties, of what importance must it be that we cultivate these ties with all tenderness and care, and scrupulously avoid every occasion of doing them injury! Of how much importance is it, in the first place, that we give that honour to our parents, which, leaving out of view the sacred command of our Divine Father, is so strongly required of us, not only by gratitude for early nurture, and for the trouble, anxiety, and cost which they have freely suffered and expended in our behalf, but in order that we might continue to enjoy the full measure of that parental affection, which, in all young people of right minds and feelings, has heretofore been the greatest blessing of life! Of what importance is it, with a view to ourselves becoming the honoured head of a family circle, that we do not at the very first step—namely, in marriage—barter away the affections, and all their golden associations, for some unworthy object, the end of which will be loneliness and sickness of heart, and an endless train of miseries, perhaps, which even wealth, though it may gild, can never alleviate! Or what importance is it, that, in all our intercourse with brothers, with sisters, and even with more distant relations—for, thanks to the Fountain of all Good, there is much earnest affection beyond the immediate family circle—we should avoid all those nameless and almost imperceptible causes of wrath, which so often arise, like the viewless pestilence, to dissever the hearts which nature has intended to be the fondest, and leave, each to the loneliness of his own desolate and angry feelings, those who know that they ought to be as one, and, even in their disunion, wish to be so!

The general sense of mankind is well aware of the blessing of the affections, and of the necessity of guarding and fostering them by all attainable means. When a child offers an indignity to his parent, society feels it as a common

wound. When a matrimonial alliance is formed, in which the affections are obviously disregarded that some sordid interest may be consulted, all rightly constituted persons experience a distressing sensation, as if some insult were offered to nature, and, through nature, to themselves. When an estrangement takes place between brothers, or any other nearly related persons fall into a quarrel, every individual who knows the parties experiences as real a shock, and as definite a pain, as if a blow were given. On the other hand, there are few things (apart from what immediately concern themselves) which so readily brighten the countenances of men, as to observe or to be informed of any instance in which relations live harmoniously, and in the habitual exercise of loving kindness towards each other. We are all in general cold enough; of that there can be no doubt. Yet no man is so abandoned to the empire of an evil nature, that he will not survey with pleasure, and a contagious goodness, however transient, the tenderness, for instance, of a pure and gentle daughter towards a helpless parent—the devotion of an only son to a widowed mother—the friendship of brothers seeking to support each other against the general calamities of life. Such sights as these elevate and refine every nature, for they are all of heaven that has been left upon the earth.

It unfortunately happens, notwithstanding all the blessings to be derived from family affections, and the general respect which is sure to be paid to any instance of their being properly cultivated, that kinsmen often fall out, and that no hostility is so ill to heal as one between such parties. The principal causes of this may, we think, be easily traced, and some precautions may as easily be taken to obviate them.

It has pleased the Creator of the human race to inspire them with different dispositions, different likings and dislikes, and many various passions, which, if allowed free scope and exercise, would not only be vicious in themselves, but produce infinite mischief from the simple circumstance

of their running foul of the passions and dispositions of others, and so leading to endless warfare among men. To prevent the diverse tastes and tendencies of mankind from jostling each other, society has established a conventional system of manners, known by the phrase "good breeding," which prevents one person from saying such things as he pleases, if the saying of such things be likely to displease others. This check, unfortunately, is of least avail in families, being there deranged in its exercise by the easiness and familiarity which near relationship and early habits have introduced, and even rendered in some measure laudable. As it is at the same time a fact in nature, that greater differences of disposition prevail among at least collateral relations, than what are to be found in an equal number of persons selected at random from the community, and as relations, moreover, are most frequently engaged in the transactions which are apt to produce contrariety of interest, and excite opposite natures, the result obviously must be, that dissensions more frequently take place among them than among other persons. When once offence has been given and taken among friends, it is easy to see that a reconciliation must be more difficult and hopeless than in any other case, since, even if there were no other causes, the very fact of the offence having been given by a friend must make it seem the less excusable.

Now, nothing can be clearer than that the true way to avoid such unhappy enmities is to call into exercise in families, if not the formal manners which are necessary to avoid divisions in general society, at least a greater share of that mutual bearing and forbearing which constitutes the best part of "good breeding." Some one has remarked with much force, that, as two hard substances are necessary to strike fire, so two obdurate natures are requisite in a quarrel. In all dissensions, each invariably thinks himself the innocent and ill-used party, and throws the whole blame upon his neighbour. But this is an absurdity in nature. If either had had a sincere desire to avoid quarrel-

ling, a little endurance and a little forbearance—no matter from which side—would have had the effect. Did wrath come from one side!—would not “a soft word” from the other have “turned it away?” Hence, it may be observed, that an imperious and a yielding nature form a union little liable to be disturbed by quarrels. Let no one say that to be constantly giving way to the worse passions of a neighbour is an unmanly sacrifice that ought not to be made. “Peace, peace, peace,” as the good Lord Falkland cried, “give us peace upon any terms.” And, moreover, will the want of reason in one person excuse the want of a gentle spirit in another? Ought we not, rather, by yielding, to hold up an example to our less happily constituted friend, or, if all other good ends fail, by forgiveness heap coals of fire upon his head?

THE TWO BROTHERS.

Of the divided affections too often observable among brothers, a most remarkable instance happened a few years ago in the family of a gentleman of the north of Scotland. George and William Stirling were the only sons of the gentleman alluded to, and they had grown to manhood in the exercise of that mutual kindness which it is so delightful to observe in relations of that degree of consanguinity. I am not aware that there was any thing remarkable in their characters: they were simply two respectable young men, of good education; and while the elder was reared to the enjoyment of a competent fortune, the younger soon attained such a degree of distinction at the bar as rendered his fate little less enviable. On the death of their mother, which took place when they were between twenty and thirty years of age, some dispute arose respecting a legacy, the destination of which had not been expressed in terms sufficiently clear, and which, after a brief suit at law, was determined in fa-

your of the elder brother. At first it was resolved by the two brothers that this plea should be amicably conducted, merely for the purpose of deciding an uncertain matter ; but some circumstances unexpectedly occurred, which acting upon the inflammable nature of the elder, and not being met with a proper spirit by the younger brother, speedily produced a decided alienation between them. Each retired sullenly into the fortress of his own pride ; nor were their father's entreaties and good offices, or their common recollection of twenty affectionate and happy years, of the least avail in bringing them once more together. They did not again meet for ten years : it was at their father's funeral. The old gentleman had died in presence of his eldest son only, reiterating with his latest breath those injunctions, so often before employed in vain, that his two sons might be restored to brotherly friendship : an object, he said, which engrossed his thoughts so much in life, that he felt as if he could not rest at peace in his grave unless it were accomplished. The two brothers met, but without taking the least notice of each other, when respectively mounting their carriages, in order to follow the corpse of their parent to the family burying-place in Aberdeen. Their hearts were still filled with fierce and indignant feelings towards each other, though it is not improbable that the elder had been somewhat touched, almost imperceptibly to himself, by the dying entreaties of his father. The procession, consisting of a hearse and the carriages of the two brothers, set out on its long and dreary journey, which was rendered additionally melancholy by the gloom of a December day. It was originally designed that there should be no stoppage, except to exchange horses, till they reached their destination ; but this arrangement was destined to be strangely disconcerted. A fall of snow, which had begun only that morning in the low country, was found, when they reached the hilly region, to have been of two days' continuance ; and it was with the greatest difficulty that they reached a lonely inn, about half way towards the capital, beyond which

it was declared by the postillions there was no possibility of proceeding that day. This humble place of entertainment was accustomed to lodge only such guests as carvers, and as it was partly occupied on the present occasion by various wayfarers, the host, with all anxiety to accommodate such distinguished guests as those who had just arrived, found he could not by any means offer them more than two rooms. It was his expectation, that, while one of these was devoted, as decency required, to the reception of the corpse, the other would serve for the two mourners; and he accordingly proposed to make up an additional bed in the room which he had marked as that which would receive his living guests. What was his astonishment, and what was the astonishment of all the inmates of the house, when he was informed by a servant that one of the gentlemen would sleep in one of these rooms, while the other had no objection to that in which he had placed the corpse! It was not, however, for him to make any resistance to such an arrangement, and he accordingly caused the rooms to be prepared as befitted the taste of his guests.

It must communicate a strange feeling to know that two brothers—men of cultivated understanding, and each respected in his sphere for public and private worth—actually carried this dreadful arrangement into effect, in order to avoid what they must have contemplated as a more painful thing—the spending of a single night in each other's company. It was the younger who proposed, as a solution of the dilemma in which he found they were placed, to take up his quarters in the same chamber with the corpse: unpardonable as the elder was for his share of the dissension, it is but justice to him to state, that he could not, after the dying request of his father, have encountered the sensations which might be expected to arise in so dreadful a situation. During the evening, as the storm prevented them from going out of doors, each kept his own room, and was severally served with the refreshments which he required. Night came, and each went to rest.

Morning returned, and still the storm was unabated. It was therefore necessary to spend another day in the same extraordinary circumstances. Slowly, slowly waned the hours of the twilight day; and still the snow continued to fall in its broad and lazy flakes, seeming, to the two brothers, as each surveyed it listlessly from his window, the very personification of monotony. As the rooms were close to each other, and only divided by a thin partition, through which there was a door of communication, each of the unhappy gentlemen could overhear every thing that his neighbour did, almost to his very breathing. It at length became the amusement of each, unknown to his fellow, to watch the proceedings of the other—to note every foot-fall, to register every sigh. George, in particular, became interested, in spite of himself, in the situation of his brother, which, in consideration of what he had heard from the lips of his dying father, bore to him an aspect more repulsive and painful than it perhaps did to the actual sufferer. At length, when, after a weary day, the time of rest again drew nigh, and the house became more than usually still, he heard a groan—a groan partly suppressed, but still bearing distinctly the impress of unutterable anguish—proceed from his brother's room. He listened more intently, and in a few minutes he could make out that the living tenant of the death-chamber was prostrated beside the coffin—weeping—bitterly weeping—but still making every effort to bury the expression of his grief in his own bosom. It may easily be imagined that such sounds, coming upon a heart which had been insensibly undergoing a softening process during the whole day, must have had the best effect. Still the rancour of ten years was not to be got over by tears shed under such circumstances. He softly stole, however, to the door, and watched with the most intense anxiety every respiration and movement of his afflicted brother. After waiting a few minutes, he distinctly heard William breathe forth the words, “Oh, mother!” and that in a tone which referred so pointedly to

the source of their unhappy quarrel, that he could no longer entertain a doubt as to the nature of his brother's present reflections. A thousand tender associations were awakened by that endeared word; he reverted to the early days when they had no contention but for her affections, no rivalry but for the kind bounty which she was always ready to bestow upon each alike. Human nature could hold out no longer, and he gently tapped at the door which had hitherto kept them apart. "William," he said, "may I come in?" The voice of affection could not be mistaken. William opened the door in an instant, and, as if he had guessed intuitively the disposition of his brother, rushed into his arms.

The next day saw the two brothers amicably proceeding in one vehicle to the family burial-place, where, in the grave of their father, they inhumed every bitter feeling they had ever entertained against each other; and at present, taught by the sufferings which they endured in their period of alienation, there is no pair of friends who take such pains to cherish each other's affections, or to avoid all means of converting them into gall.

HINTS TO TALKERS.

"Aye free aff hand your story tell."—BURNS.

It is of no small importance to one who has to push his way in the world, that he should be able to express himself, on all occasions, in so ready and brief a manner as to run no risk of tiring the individuals upon whom he may be more or less dependent for the means of his advancement. There is unfortunately some difficulty in attaining a proper medium between a fluency of speech, which is apt to lead to an excessive and tiresome copiousness, and that languor and difficulty of expression, which equally tires, without giving nearly the same quantity of talk. The former fault is more generally an accompaniment of

youth the ~~same~~ age, while the latter is most frequently found in old ~~people~~. All such peculiarities are no doubt in a great measure involuntary, as being intimately dependent on the talents and character of individuals; yet that they are susceptible of correction, and may be partly avoided, if we are on our guard against them, is also very certain.

An undue loquacity most frequently arises from a precipitancy of temper, and from being too full of one's self. If persons afflicted from the former source were to check themselves into a sobriety of ideas, and cast about, a little before speaking, for the most straightforward and simply demonstrative phraseology, wherein to express what they had to say, they would soon cure themselves: if those who err from vanity could only contrive, under beneficial advice, to pump a little of themselves out of themselves—if they would only be so good as observe that others have ideas to express, and perhaps a little desire of showing them off, as well as they—they would also, we have no doubt, speedily lessen their malady. But, upon the whole, there is less annoyance experienced from this source than from the tedious twaddle, as it is called, of the duller kind of intellects; and a cure in the latter case is much more desperate. Yet there would be much less tiresome talk, and also less tiresome writing, if a few things were guarded against. A great deal, as every adroit talker and every experienced writer knows, lies in fixing an interest at the beginning: only take care not to alarm at the offset by the prospect of a long story, and you may afterwards continue to speak or scribble as long, almost, as you choose. Every one may have remarked how distressing it is in church to hear the preacher lay out his discourse into heads—so much to be said on this point, so much on that; next, an application of the whole; and, finally, a few words (that is, as many as can be spoken in ten minutes) of exhortation. The idea of so many distinct parts in the composition causes it to look wearifully long from the very first, so that many lukewarm persons, who might otherwise have

listened and caught some flying edification, think of nothing but how—in what posture—by what every-day subject of reflection within themselves—they may most easily pass the time. Neither preacher nor writer should ever say that he has any thing to say at all: he should begin with the subject itself, and never stop till it is exhausted. Two hours of attention may thus be obtained from many, who, if informed at the beginning that one was to be required for the purpose, would have refused to listen for a minute. So thoroughly does this hold good, that we have found ourselves deterred from proceeding with a story, on a shift taking place in the person of the narrator, or a distinct paper or document being introduced. A reader, indeed, should never know but that the article he is reading would end on the next page: the author is never sure of him till after he has been inveigled half way on.

The slow garrulity of old age, even to those who are most disposed to reverence grey hairs, is sometimes dreadful. For a young and busy man of quick ideas to find himself suddenly arrested by a venerable friend, who has some trifling but intricate piece of business to transact, or some document to read, or some long and personal story to tell, is one of the most striking distresses that can arise in the wide amphitheatre of human misery. The very unpacking of the spectacles is enough to make one sink and die. First, there is the important face, primming itself for the developement of some superficial, but to it most mysterious and important, circumstance. Then the hand is put into the pocket, and—not the spectacles, but the spectacle-case, drawn forth. The clasp is deliberately undone; the spectacles pulled out. You think the optical instrument is to be immediately put on. Not at all. It is laid down on the table, till the clasp is done again, and the case returned to the pocket. Then the spectacles are taken up—then a handkerchief is taken out to wipe them—then the process of wiping is carefully and slowly gone through—then the handkerchief is returned—and, finally—Oh

protracted misery!—they are raised to the nose, where they are, perhaps, fully adjusted, about ten minutes after being drawn from the pocket; that is to say, if they have not been delayed much longer in consequence of a fresh burst of preliminary explanation and preparatory fiddle-faddle. Oh, if these respectable old gentlemen would but consider how much unfledged youth has to do before he be equally well feathered with themselves—how fast his intellect naturally runs—how irksome to be thus chained to the dray, when he would like to bound forward with the chariot—they would be heart-smitten with their cruelty, and from pity correct a fault to which every other kind of cure might be applied in vain.

I was once walking along one of the long and, empty streets in the west end of London, along with a young friend, who, like myself, generally resided in Edinburgh, but was now just returned from an extensive tour in the United States of America. Suddenly, my companion started, and seemed greatly alarmed, saying, hurriedly, “let us go down this side street!” I accompanied him in the direction he indicated, though I could see nothing in front to alarm him, nor indeed any object at all, except a well-dressed middle-aged looking man, who was advancing from the opposite direction, and was still at a considerable distance. When we had reached a place of safety, as my friend called it, he gave me the explanation which he saw from my looks was required. “That gentleman,” said he, “whom we were just now about to meet, is a valetudinarian whom I had the misfortune to encounter in a coffeehouse when I was last in London. I do not think he is really very ill: only, like the most of Englishmen, he has perhaps been all his life in the habit of every now and then taking what they call a little medicine, and may have thus, perhaps, made himself ill in spite of himself. However, having fallen into conversation with the old gentleman one evening in the public room at our hotel, he began to give me such a recital of his many and complicated disorders, and of his

various attempts to get quit of them, as made me almost as ill as he represented himself to be. I tried many expedients to cut him short, but was at length fairly obliged to take refuge in my bedroom. Nothing else would do. Now, the man would not perhaps be so very tiresome as he is, if it depended solely on what he has to say. But besides the tedium of his endless recital of clinical miseries, there is an unhappy dullness in his very voice, which proves by far the severest part of the affliction. If a sloth, for instance, were a beast of prey, which fastened upon you as a spider does upon a fly, and if it emitted a humming self-satisfied sound while sucking your blood, like a schoolboy at his bread and butter, your circumstances and sensations would, I dare say, exactly resemble mine when this man was pouring his prose stream into my ears. I positively had to go to the opera next night, in order to restore my nerves to their wonted tone. Before that time, however, you may be sure I had taken care to shift my quarters, to prevent the possibility of falling in with the same man again. I did not see him any more, sir, till about a twelvemonth after, when, in turning the corner of a street in New York, I met him full in the face, and, of course, fell plump into his toils. After the slightest possible recognition, 'Oh, by the way,' said he, laying at the same time a finger like a grappling-iron aboard of my button-hole, 'as I was saying when I saw you last, I got no good of Lignum's scorbutic drops. All stuff, sir. The irritation continued as bad as ever'—and so on he went, with his monotonous gummy voice, as if the time and space that intervened since our last rencounter had been as nothing in his estimation. Why, sir, there is a particular jest in Joe Miller, which I always used to think highly improbable, though certainly very droll. A gentleman, riding along a bridge one day, turned about to his servant, and asked if he liked eggs, to which, saith the chronicler, John answered 'Yes.' 'How?' said the gentleman exactly that day twelvemonth, at the same hour, when passing along

the same bridge. 'Poached, sir,' replied the man, without a moment's hesitation. I always used to think this a mere fiction, but now I saw that such an incident might be quite real. There is nothing, sir, on earth like the perseverance of a regular twaddler in the line of his vocation. You may break him off if you will, or if you can; but till you have fairly heard him out, he will never think himself quits with you—he still holds himself in readiness, at whatever part of the world or whatever period of future life he meets you again, to resume the thread of his discourse.

"I listened, sir, for half an hour to the leaden narrative, which still seemed as far from the conclusion as ever. Many an effort I made to give the affair a turn—to throw in a jest, and escape under its cover—but no: every struggle I made served but to fix his finger the more nervously in my cloth. I had no consolation but the apathy of despair, and that I could not resign myself to. However, as good luck would have it, a procession came suddenly upon us, preceded by a band of music, and followed by a sweeping crowd of boys. We were for half a minute drifted along together, he still clinging furiously to the breast of my coat; but at length he parted from me, and, to my infinite satisfaction, I saw him borne away in a contrary direction from myself—still turning, however, towards me an eager and anxious look, as if he were like to burst with suppressed information respecting the efficacy of Morrison's universal medicines.

"Sir, I met my tormentor once more; but it was on the tops of different stage-coaches, which were passing each other upon the road. He recognised me just as we shot athwart each other: his dull eye kindled, he threw forward his heavy head as if to speak, and instinctively put forth his finger to catch hold of my button. I was safe, however, for this time. We were rapidly taken out of each other's sight. I could only guess, by his look, as he loomed away into the distance, how distressed he was at being still obliged to postpone what he had to say about

the medical preparations which he was beginning to discuss in New York. Since then, I have not once met him till this day; and you may conceive, from what I have told you, how much reason I had to be alarmed at his approach, how much reason to be delighted at my good fortune in eluding him. This pleasure, however, is only temporary. I am destined, I see, to hear out his story: go where I like, it will come upon me somewhere. All I can do is to put off the evil day as long as I can."

If there be any spark of humane feeling in the twaddlers, they will surely be impressed by this striking anecdote of the misery inflicted by one of their fraternity, and will exert themselves as much as possible to correct their fault. Just let every man make a resolution never to speak above fifteen seconds at a time about himself, or any thing that is his, and he will never be otherwise than an agreeable member of the community. There is a respectability in suffering, which disposes every man to listen for a while, with decent attention, to the narratives which sick people are always so ready to give to their friends. But this good and kind feeling should not be abused: there is a limit to our sympathies, beyond which all is hypocrisy; and it would be well if the afflicted would join a just calculation of this extent of general compassion, with their own sense of the importance of their distresses, when they begin to talk upon the subject. If there be this limit to our interest in the sick, how much narrower are the bounds of that which we are naturally inclined to take in the personal affairs and little vanities of able-bodied men! We should, if we really esteem ourselves, be far above all miserable attempts to set ourselves off before a neighbour, by boring him, as he will call it, with our concerns, when he has enough to attend to of his own.

POLLY PARTAN,

A BALLAD.

Oh, pretty Polly Partan ! she was a damsel gay,
And, with a creel upon her back, she every night would stray
To the market-cross of Edinburgh, where singing she would stand,
While the gayest lords in Edinburgh ate oysters from her hand.

Oh, such a beauty Polly was, she dang the fish-wives a'—
Her cheek was like the partan's back, her nose was like its claw !
Oh, how divinely did she look, when to her face there cam
The blushes that accompany the taking of a dram !

Her love he was a sailor, a sailor on the sea,
And of a Greenland whaler the second mate was he ;
But the Northern Sea now covers him beneath its icy wave,
And the ice-berg is the monument that lies upon his grave.

As pretty Polly Partan one night was going home,
And thinking of Tam Hallibuck and happy days to come,
Endeavouring to recollect if she was fou or not,
And counting that night's profits in her kilted petticoat ;

She had not gone a mile, a mile down the Newhaven road,
When the spirit of Tam Hallibuck before poor Polly stood ;
The hiccup rose unhiccuped through her amazed throat,
And the shilling dropt uncounted into her petticoat ;

Oh, cold turned Polly Partan, but colder was the ghost,
Who shiver'd in his shirt as folks are apt to do in frost ;
And while from out his cheek he spat the phantom of a quid,
From the ghost of his tobacco-box he lifted off the lid.

" Oh, Polly," cried the spirit, " you may weep nae mair for me,
For my body it lies cauld and deep beneath the frozen sea ;
Oh, will ye be my bride, and go where sleeps your ain true lover,
The tangle-weed shall be your bed, the mighty waves its cover ?"

" Oh, yes, I'll go !" cried Polly, " for I can lo'e nane but you ;"
And she turn'd into a spirit, and away with Tam she flew :
And in her track, far to the north, a ghastly light there shone,
Her coats were like the comet's tail, her fish-creel like the moon.

And some folk about Buckhaven, that were lecturing that night
On th' aurora borealis and its beauties all so bright,
Saw the spiritual lovers, with the lightning's quickest motion,
Shoot down among the streamers like two stars into the ocean.

R. C.

THE WARDROBE OF THE DEAD.

Who has not heard of the green hills, the lofty woods, the deep dells, and silver stream of Yarrow; and of its many legends, its melancholy tales, and the numberless ballads and sweet songs they have given rise to; and who ever visited it without being deeply impressed by its magic scenes? This region of fancy, this land of romance, was the place of my birth; and to it the present little narrative is intended to add another feature of interest. I left it in my girlish days, for a distant country, where I remained an exile till the autumn of life began to steal upon me. It had been my fortune to journey in lands far-famed for their beauty, where all that was lovely in picturesque scenery and genial in climate wooed the stay of the traveller; but no scene I had visited during thirty years could in my mind ever come into comparison with my native Yarrow. No one, I believe, ever felt more deeply the delight of revisiting the hallowed haunts of their childhood, than I did, when returned once more to my native vale. I made my way, on a bright ethereal morning in the beginning of June, through each well-remembered path, to the house of an early and much-valued friend. As I looked around me, I thought I had never seen, since I quitted this earthly paradise of my imagination, trees of such fresh and graceful foliage—groves so fitted for the dwelling-place of "heavenly pensive melancholy"—such green pastures—or, above all, a stream, which, as it glided along, seemed so to murmur through its deep recesses of a peace which the bustling

world can never know. I had heard strange tales of the friend I was hastening to see—reports which grieved me to the heart, and which, though I found some comfort in the belief of their being exaggerations, still caused me a great degree of uncertainty and painful anxiety as to their truth. In short, I had heard in the neighbourhood that my old friend Mrs Haldane, who lost her husband and seven children before she had been ten years married, was supposed to be in a state of derangement.

It is not my intention to enter here into a minute history of either my friend's life or my own. I shall therefore only say, that her father and mine were schoolfellows, who retained for each other the strictest friendship through life. She and I each lost our mothers when very young; and on the death of her father, which happened when she was seventeen, being like myself an only child, my father brought her to live with us. At that time I was only ten years old, and it seemed the constant endeavour of the grateful Mary to repay my father's kindness, by restraining in me every perceptible tendency to evil, and by treating me with the most sisterly affection, which, together with the tenderness I experienced from my father, made those early days of my life one continued scene of happiness. No wonder, then, that these associations had kept alive an enthusiastic attachment to the place of my birth and the friend of my childhood, and caused me to return to them as soon as I set my foot on British ground. The peaceful days I had experienced under my parent's roof, were, however, cut short by his death, when I attained my twentieth year; and I went to reside in the south of England with a near relation, where I soon married, and went abroad with my husband. Previous to my father's death, our dear Mary had left us for a house of her own, having married a young man who had a long lease of an extensive farm in the vale of Yarrow. Her husband was said not to be the good character his wife had imagined. That their tastes were widely dissimilar, and that he frequently

treated her with harshness, I could not fail to observe, though she never complained, and seemed so devoted to two sweet children, which were born before I left the country, that she appeared to me to enjoy a moderate degree of happiness. Eight years more, as I have said, had only passed over her head, when, after having given birth to seven children, she became a childless widow. It was the fear that her mournful fate might indeed have unsettled her reason, that filled my mind with the most nervous perturbation as I drew near to her well-remembered dwelling, which seemed in nothing altered from what I had left it, save that the trees which nearly surrounded it had extended their clustering foliage so shadingly over its roof, as to exclude from it the rays of the glorious sun which shone so resplendently on their outward branches, and thus gave it a more sombre cast than it was wont to have. But there were no signs of neglect. All around it looked neat and comfortable, and the roses and honeysuckles were as trimly trained against the walls as ever. My low and tremulous rap at the door was immediately answered by an old domestic, who, in spite of years and her grey locks, I recognised as the same Margaret who was my father's dairy-maid, and who went home with my friend when she married. I lost no time in making myself known to her, and inquired if I could see her mistress, which, after expressing her joy and wonder at my visit, she informed me I should soon do, as she was only taking her accustomed morning walk, from which she every instant expected her. Margaret then ushered me into a little parlour where she was preparing breakfast; and feeling glad to have this opportunity of hearing, before I saw her, something that I could depend upon about the state of my friend's mind, I gave some hints of the report which had caused me so much uneasiness. "She is nae mair beside herself than I am," said her faithful old servant; "though it is not to be wondered at that folks who have not the sense to understand her should raise sic reports," she con-

tinued, while an expression of indignation marked her intelligent features. "It is all because she has given up the world, having never gane off the farm since the last bairn died, and that's thirty years come next Martinmas. And mair especially because she makes herself sae happy in the thought that the weans are still about her."

"*About her!*" said I, repeating, with surprise and dismay, what I thought so extraordinary an assertion; "but is not that at least very strange?"

"I canna think there is ony thing strange in that," replied Margaret, "if ye mind how often the Holy Scriptures of truth tell us o' the visits o' angels to the earth, and how they are sent to attend and watch over us; and surely nane o' the angels in heaven can be sae sib till her as her ain bairns." Understanding from this that it was not their visible presence that was meant by their being *about her*, I willingly acquiesced in her ideas, and had just time to learn from her, before my friend appeared, that she had sublet the farm to a person in the neighbourhood, making it a stipulation that she was not to remove from the house during her life, and that she received an advance of rent, which, together with some money left her by her husband, supplied her with ample means of beneficence to her poorer neighbours. Margaret met her mistress at the door, and having briefly informed her of my arrival, I was instantly folded in her arms, in one of those tender embraces which she had so often bestowed on me in my youth. I looked earnestly on her. She was much changed, but there were on her features none of those deep furrows, or harsh markings of time and intense mental suffering, which I had expected to see. On the contrary, her deep blue eyes beamed upon me with an expression of such ineffable peace, that, in spite of her melancholy history, I felt the conviction thrill through my heart, that I, with all my worldly attachments, was a much fitter object of commiseration.

We finished our breakfast, without either of us having

alluded, in the slightest manner, to her trials ; but I thought there was a degree of absence and restraint about her, foreign to her former nature, till she observed that my attention was attracted by several little chairs and stools that stood interspersed among the other furniture of the room, when, following the direction of my eye, she said, " they belonged to the children ; I keep all their things about me. But come, and I will show you my treasury," she continued, as she rose, and then, stopping for an instant, she said with earnestness, " if you will promise me not to touch any thing." I gave the promise, and followed her along a passage, till, having unlocked the door of a small room, and opened the window shutter, she directed my attention to seven pins, driven into the wall at a short distance from each other, on each of which hung, covered with dust, and so impaired by time that some of them were dropping to pieces, a full suit of child's clothes.

" These," said she, pointing to them, " are of greater value to me than all besides that the world contains. They are just as they were taken off from my dear ones the last time they wore them ; no touch has come upon them since. I have many things that belonged to them, but these are more to me than all the rest, for they have embraced their bodies, and seem part of their mortal remains, that are still suffered to linger with me. I cannot help this feeling, though it might be supposed of little consequence to one who knows that she is always surrounded with their happy spirits ; for of this," she said with solemnity, " I have full assurance. Yes," she continued, " they are ever with me." While she said this, an expression perfectly beatific passed over her countenance. After a moment's pause she pointed out the vestments of a little boy. " These belonged," she said, " to my sweet little William, with his blooming cheeks, and laughing eyes, and clustering sunny curls. Oh, he was a joyous child, and, though sudden in passion, one look of love from me brought back the soft tones of his melodious little voice,

and the buoyant laugh of happiness, while the big round tear still stood on his cheek. He seemed to me almost as much a cherub then as he is now ; he died of croup at three years old. And these," she continued, "were my gentle Mary's, who was the very reverse of her brother in appearance and disposition, for her soft eyes were dark, and full of serious and pensive expression. She never seemed as if intended for this world, but only sent for a time to twine herself around my heart, and depart to become one of my guardian spirits while I am here, and to enhance my happiness hereafter. Mary was, indeed, a sweet child, that seemed entirely made of love. Her little pleadings were always irresistible, and she was ever listened to as the peace-maker in every childish dispute ; for neither old nor young could withstand the witchery of her sweet tongue, or the glance of her full soft eyes, when, as I think I see her now, she threw back from them her bright brown ringlets, and fixed their loving looks upon you. And to the last look it still was love ; for she died with her arms twined round my neck, and her pretty mouth pressed against my cheek, as in the act of giving me her last kiss."

My tears fell fast ; but, without noticing them, she still proceeded to name in rotation those to whom the clothes had belonged, and to describe their persons, and the varieties of disposition by which they were distinguished, in such graphic language that I seemed, while I stood in that sepulchral room, to become intimately and personally acquainted with each child who had worn the mouldering garments—they seemed almost visibly assembled round me. I remained several days the guest of my friend, glad of an opportunity of observing the effects of so singular, though it appears to me so natural, a belief in this lonely woman. To other mothers bereaved of their children, all is desolate ; they look upon the places they were wont to occupy, and mourn. But her bosom was not oppressed by sighs, nor her eyes dimmed by tears, though she every where

saw the traces of her beloved ones ; for no circumstance had the power, after the lapse of so many years, to obliterate them from her remembrance for a moment. She lived constantly among the happy spirits of her children. Their joyous little faces surrounded her table—they gambolled beside her in her walks—and when awake in the night, she seemed to hear their soft breathings, as she was wont to do in years long gone by, when they peacefully slumbered beside her. To her there was no such thing as solitude ; wherever she moved, she was accompanied by this little band of domestic angels, encouraging and beckoning her on to regions of celestial gladness, from which they had returned to point the way, and where her spirit rejoiced that they were safely lodged, for ever free from sin and care. She lived in an atmosphere of purity, guarded by those holy beings to whose mortal bodies she had given birth ; and she awaited her own final departure in perfect peace and tranquillity.

CALLS.

THE subject of calls, though of late much discussed in various quarters, is not yet by any means exhausted. It is a subject of great importance to the community, especially the female part of it, and deserves to be treated with all the reflection and carefulness that can be had. “ My dear,” said Mrs Balderstone to me one fine day, “ I am shamefully behind in my calls. That ‘ ladies’ work,’ and one thing and another, have kept me pretty close to the house for the better part of half a year, and during all that time my arrears have been accumulating in such a way that I now hardly know how to face my friends. I declare it would take a full week to pay off all the calls that I am owing. And then, as for yourself, you know you never have once paid a morning visit since you were mar-

ried. That endless *business* of yours occupies you so much, that you neglect every thing else, and your own health into the bargain. I really must have you pulled out of the house to-day, to take a walk with me. Suppose you just for once accompany me on a round of calls, and see two or three of those friends of mine who have so long expressed an anxiety to see you, but whom you have never been able to see, either in their houses or your own. Yes, yes, you *will* come. It will be so delightful to have you out for a day. See how fine the day is ! You cannot resist : it *will* do you so much good," &c. &c. There was no resisting blandishments like these, particularly as I really had nothing better at the time to do. I therefore dressed myself somewhat punctiliously, and sallied out with Mrs Balderstone, who seemed to enjoy excessively the conquest she supposed herself to have gained over my propensity to stay at home. Under my left arm went the good lady herself : in my right hand hung her reticule, and, at all the shady places, her parasol was also committed to my charge. "Where shall we go first?" inquired I. "Oh, just leave it all to me," responded my spouse, in her usual absolute manner—a style of speech, be it remarked, which, though I generally tolerate it in matters indifferent, would not be submitted to in others of a graver nature. Only, I am always of opinion that it is best to keep up one's powers of resistance till there is a real occasion for them. Well, away we went; the sun shone gaily out; the streets were well watered; the great fashionable street was in a stir; and it *was* "so" delightful. The chief scene of our intended inroads was in the distant part of the town; so we walked, and walked, and better walked, as the nursery stories say, till we were at length so much fatigued that we could hardly hold out any longer without both rest and refection. "It is so fortunate," remarked my wife, in reference to our exhausted condition, "the first call we have to make is upon honest old Mrs Davidson, who is never from home, and who always presses people to wine and cake. She is con-

sidered, you know, as a very plain kind of person; but she certainly *is* kind." No more respectable character could have at that moment been presented to me; and burning with prospective reverence for the good-old woman, we approached her door. I had some notion of ~~even~~ taking the liberty of asking this worthy Christian for a glass of beer—that is, supposing that she should not herself offer it. What—what was our grief when we were informed that Mrs Davidson was from home! She had gone to spend a fortnight in the country, and was not to be back till Friday week. Friday week! echoed my spirit within me—or some other organ—the very idea of such a stretch of time before being able to partake of the anticipated hospitality, caused me nearly to faint upon her threshold. Women, however, are proverbially fertile in resources. "Though Mrs Davidson has failed us," said my spouse, "there is Mrs Galloway, my old school-companion—Jessy Carmichael, you know—she that was married last year—lives only two streets off: and though it is out of our line of march, I think we had better go there before calling any where else, for I think she is sure at least to offer us a glass of wine. She returned my first call about the New Year, and I have not seen her since. She will be thinking, I dare say, that we have cut acquaintance." Ofcourse I had no objection to try Mrs Galloway, being quite indifferent as to the port we should make for, provided only that *port* should be found after all. Pleasing intelligence! Mrs Galloway was at home. We were shown into a drawing-room, bearing that appearance of exquisite arrangement and perfect lustre of polish which strikes the beholder, so invariably, with an idea the opposite of eating or drinking. Oh, thought I, there is nothing for us here. And I was right. Mrs Galloway, who soon appeared, received us in a manner not at all peculiar for any thing, and, after the usual chit-chat, permitted us to take our leave unregaled. We now called on some other friends, but all were from home. "Is there no one you are sure

of?" inquired I. "Oh, yes," said Mrs Balderstone; "just come along to the next square, and see the Stewarts; they have a hot lunch every day, you know, exactly at two, and are just upon the hour. This cannot fail us." I acknowledge that, if she were quite certain as to the habit of the lunch and the hour when it took place, we had a good chance in this case; and accordingly we were soon at the door of the Stewarts. Oh transport! not only were the good folk at home, but at the very moment the door was opened, we became as assured as the olfactory sense could make us, of the fact we had just been debating. The lunch of the Stewarts, like the French chaster under Louis Philip, was a reality, and to all appearance a pretty substantial one. Well, we were shown up stairs—not into the family parlour, however, but into a small speak-a-word room, where, after we had remained for about three minutes, we were joined by Mrs Stewart, all in a flutter of apparent pleasure at the unusual honour of a visit from Mr, in addition to Mrs Balderstone. Now, thought I, now is the time. The lunch cannot keep long. You must ask us down. What, what! no invitation—still all talkee, talkee, and no eatee, eatee? Immortal powers, it was so! There did Mrs Stewart sit for ten minutes, without ever seeming to suppose that either we or herself had either taste or smell. Strange mischances sometimes occur in domestic matters. There may be visitors in one part of a house, whom you cannot bring into contact with others who have arrived later. And such might be the embarrassing case of this lady; yet it was strange, passing strange, and went to a degree above all common precedent, that we should have been coolly conducted through the notorious fumes of this hot lunch, and permitted to depart, with appetites almost savage, to seek somewhere else for the solacement which we had there so confidently expected. I now saw that calls were a business which did not support itself, and I proposed to my amiable partner, that, before proceeding farther, we should

refresh ourselves by the only mode which presented a perfect certainty of effect—that is to say, by adjourning to a restorateur's. She was piqued, however, to make out her case without resorting to that expedient, and entreated me to accompany her on just one other call, where she felt quite certain of success, as she was on such an intimate footing with the lady, that she could take the liberty of asking for something. I consented, and, after traversing another street or two, we arrived at the house in question. While I was knocking, Mrs Balderstone said, in an insinuating tone of voice, that, should this lady be from home, there were two others living within a few doors, upon whom she had intended to call, and who were equally certain to provide us with some refreshment. It was evident that my worthy spouse entertained little hope of my consenting to go any farther : she merely threw out the hint, intending to pull me on yet a little way, if I *would* go, but not otherwise. "Is Mrs Simpson at home?" inquired the dame. "No, Madam," answered the servant, "she is out." "Well, just one trial more. It is only across the street." I consented. Rat, tat, tat. "Is Mrs Paterson at home?" "No, Madam, she is out." "Ay, ay," said I, after we had given our cards and retired, "and the children are out too, I could warrant, and the cat, and the dog, and the fire also. My dear," I added seriously, "it wont do any longer. This going about, leaving cards at doors, may answer very well for ladies : but men have something else to attend to. How it may be with you I know not ; but I must fly to Montgomery's, or else I shall sink on the street." "Well, well, go away," said Mrs Balderstone pettishly ; "you men have no sense of what is required in society. For my part, I have at least ten other calls to make, and make them I will, though I should have to take a coach home. So adieu." We then parted, I to solace nature, and my wife to fulfil, as she called it, the ends of society. When we met again at dinner, I used some art to discover her adventures subsequent to our

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parting. It appeared that of the ten persons she had called upon, she had seen one, who, at her request, gave her a glass of wine. The other nine were all out, probably invited by that very excellence of the weather which had tempted forth Mrs Balderstone, and engaged, no doubt, in the same truly rational employment of leaving cards at the doors of all their missing acquaintance. Some of them had in fact been calling upon Mrs Balderstone in her absence, and I felt myself justified in forming a theory, that, on a fine day, all the world is abroad in the vain hope of finding each other at home. What was the most amusing thing of all, I discovered that there were a great many punctilious rules in the female world, in reference to this visionary kind of intercourse. The friends of a newly married lady call upon her first: she returns the visit as a matter of duty; after which, if the friend does not come again or invite the young couple to her house for a particular night, there is no more of it—the friendship is dropt. If it be proposed by the male friends of two ladies that they should become acquainted, the unmarried calls upon the married, or the junior upon the senior; that call is returned; after which, whether they actually saw each other or not, a friendship is supposed to be established: they have become friends by cartel. When a lady comes to reside for a time or permanently at a place where she knows several individuals of her own sex, those individuals are expected to pay her the first visit. And so forth. In fact, the political arrangements of the kingdom of Lilliput were not more amusing than the regulations of woman-kind on the subject of calls. A modern British lady walks literally by card, and the whole system resolves itself into a matter of pasteboard. Seeing how often the card represents the lady herself, she generally takes care to have it of the very finest foreign fashion, and the engraving in Kirkwood's best manner, so that her other self may bear an appearance as respectable, comparatively, as her own. Cards and women have thus become convertible ideas;

and if the cards be only preserved, it probably will not matter much, ere long, although the whole female creation should become extinct.

“HE THAT THOLES, OVERCOMES.”

ONE can go nowhere without gaining wisdom, if he only hold himself ready to receive it. The above sagacious aphorism is inscribed, in contracted and hardly intelligible characters, over the door of a very ancient house in the West Bow of Edinburgh, a street where we might expect to meet nothing now-a-days but spectacles of misery and vice.* He that tholes—that is, he who endures without flinching—overcomes: he who, however sorely afflicted, however sorely tried with calamity, suffers his pains with patience and manly fortitude, triumphs over them, and is in reality the same as if it were not his fate to be so tried. How profoundly philosophical is this maxim, or, to use a French phrase literally; which is applied metaphorically to something slightly different, this wisdom of the streets! † What, we cannot help reflecting, must have been those personal circumstances which induced the man who built this house—probably a burgher of the sixteenth century—to inscribe his property with a phrase breathing such a spirit! Whether he conceived it in his own mind, or adopted it from the kindred expression of St Paul, he must have been himself, one would suppose, a singular and conspicuous instance of the victory which patience ever achieves

* It is necessary, for the sake of the greater part of our readers, to mention that, in the older part of the Scottish capital, many of the houses exhibit pious inscriptions over the doorways, generally texts of Scripture. The above is noticed in “Traditions of Edinburgh,” vol. i. 143.

† The French speak of what we understand by the term “common sense,” as *le sens qui court les rues*—the sense which runs the streets.

over all trials, those of the body as well as those of the mind. Perhaps the acquisition of the wealth which enabled him to build this house, was the result of some remarkable exertion of his powers of endurance; and, looking upon the house as the best monument of his achievement, he thus inscribed it in a modest spirit of triumph, and with the hope, perhaps, that a maxim enforced by such a story as his would occasionally prove a support to the sinking spirits of future sufferers. If such were his views, they have long been frustrated by the treachery of time; for not only is the history of this man now unknown, but the inscription is so obscure, both in language and orthography, that it must be a mystery to almost all who are in the habit of seeing it, notwithstanding that its sense could never have been so useful or requisite as in these latter times, when the house and all around it are inhabited by an infinitely poorer class of people than at any former period. It is for the purpose of reversing its fate, and rendering it as clear to the world as ever, that we have taken notice of it in this place.

At all periods of life we are liable to troubles, some of which we can partly obviate and alleviate by prudent management, while others are so entirely beyond our control, that we can neither prevent them from coming upon us, nor obtain relief from them after they have taken effect. The commercial schemes which we have planned with the most guarded caution, and watched over with unremitting care, may be blasted by some casualty, either unforeseen, or which we had to lay our account with, at the commencement, as incidental to the mode which had been assigned to us of gaining our daily bread. Hopes still tenderer to the heart may be crushed and blighted: beings who were dearer to us than our own life may be reft from us by sudden or by slow decay: sickness may befall ourselves, or our frames may be stricken with some of those severe calamities which medical science can only look upon and despair. To such and to many other calamities are we, in

this imperfect state of being, daily and hourly exposed. Let us never forget, however, that all affliction is capable of being increased or diminished by the way in which we receive it; the weak suffering much additional distress from the reverberation of pain, so to speak, within their own agitated minds, while those possessed of fortitude, like travellers who stare a beast of prey out of countenance, turn off a great part of the danger by boldly encountering it. Do not yield to evils, says the classic maxim, but go the more daringly against them. In fact, the philosophy of this question is the same as that of a great battle, where there is always less aggregate danger to the party which stands firm than to that which gives way; the cowards being always cut down ingloriously in the flight. It may be said that many are not so framed as to encounter evils with firmness; but this is liable to great error. No one knows what degree of firmness he possesses till he musters it up by an exertion of the understanding. If he do not attempt to muster it up, he may sink needlessly into despair, and, consequently, into greater evils, for want of that which he really has. There can be no doubt that in these cases the will can be forced, if we will only try; for (if we may be allowed such an illustration) there is hardly any instance of a malefactor, who, timid in ordinary circumstances, did not display the most perfect resignation to the last award of the law, when assured that there was no hope of its being reversed. If the worst of evils can call up this firmness, why should we permit lesser distresses to overpower us? It is fairly allowable in such cases, we think, to call in the aid even of vanity, and, seeking applause from our fellow-creatures for the heroism with which we meet our trials, gain that patience of which the reverse is often called up through the same means. But it were better if we could uniformly derive our powers of endurance from an inward and unostentatious constancy of spirit, which, based upon conscious rectitude of intentions, regards calamity as only a trial of the better part of man. And, after all, there is

no evil in the world, excepting remorse, for which there is not some immediate, and often a corresponding, palliative. The genius of human suffering resembles the serpent, which is said to be always closely attended by another creature, bearing a balsam to cure its bites. As this stern spirit walks over the earth, casting her darts here and there, numberless beneficent genii hover over her path, whose duty it is to pour balm into the wounds which she has made. Wherever there is a deficiency in these remedial processes, it may be supplied by a religious patience, which is always at the command of a well-regulated mind, and the want of which may be described as almost the only calamity that is really to be deplored.

The maxim may be not only enforced in this general way, but there are many special circumstances in human life, and many classes of human beings, to whom its moral might be specially applied. We would particularly instance the young, who, from their ardent and effervescent character, are not apt to have much power of *tholing*. In this large and interesting class of persons, there are many whose natural sagacity and perseverance enable them to bear up with much patience against the obstacles with which almost every young man is tried before he can vindicate his title to consideration and employment. But, on the other hand, many more are of a soft, self-indulgent, and self-admiring character; and if they do not find every difficulty give way at *their* approach, their pride takes offence, they sink back into sloth or into equally fatal indecision, and perhaps are lost for ever. It should be impressed on every young person, that, in general, much must be done, and long delay must be endured, before they can be even put into the way of accomplishing what they desire. There is no "Open Sesame," as they may imagine, to make the portals of prosperity fly open to them; but fortune must be wooed with a solicitude and a patience proportioned to her proverbial character as the most coy and coquettish of all beings, real or imaginary, who ever

bore the female form. Far more is done in the world, by negative qualities, than they could suppose. Only hold on—*thole*—living as moderately in the meantime as possible—and it cannot fail that, as others die off, some vacancy will occur into which you will be admitted: or you will gradually be acquiring a preference, and accumulating reputation and respect, by mere *standing*, which is much the same thing. Every one must have observed that the brightest abilities at twenty have no chance against the consolidated reputation which may attend very moderate abilities at forty. This superiority, it is easy to see, has only been gained by *tholing*.

The precipitancy of youth is often shown in a very amusing manner in their affairs of the heart. When the human being arrives at about twenty, he gets dreadfully afraid that the world will run past him unenjoyed. As he grows older, he always becomes the more sensible that there is plenty of time for all the enjoyments of life, and therefore the less eager does he become to grasp them. Hence no bachelor at thirty-six is nearly so much afraid that he will be late in *settling in life*, as the generality of those who number exactly half that amount of years. And hence, after thirty-six, the chances of a bachelor changing his condition—at least in a way that will not excite the ridicule of society—always become less and less. This excessive eagerness in youth ought to be by all means controlled, so far as it does not conduce to real advancement in the world, for it is but too apt to be inconsistent with that patience which, without doubt, is the best part of the battle of life.

GRATITUDE.

HARDLY any bad thing is so much exclaimed against as ingratitude. It seems to be not only very ill taken by those who are its direct objects, but also by all who hear of any instance of it, as if every human being were interested in the exhibition of a contrary feeling, and felt injured when it was not shown. "Ingratitude!" nine out of every ten persons will cry, when the subject is but mentioned; "it is the basest of all sins. Do not let me ever hear the name of an ungrateful person." Certainly, to be so common a sin, it is one which meets with amazingly little excuse or allowance. In this, of course, there must be some fallacy; some blindness, something of some kind or other, which prevents men from seeing the fault in its proper light; for how, otherwise, should every one be ready to condemn a sin, which, from its universality, must in all probability be as characteristic of himself as of his fellow-creatures?

The truth seems to be, that if there is much ingratitude in the world, there is as much of an unreasonable expectation of the reverse—and hence a great deal of the disappointment when the reverse is not shown. Favours are not often conferred in a right spirit: they are sometimes given from a mere want of estimation for the things bestowed, sometimes for the sake of inducing greater favours in return, sometimes in the vain hope of procuring a greater friendship from the person favoured than what he has it in his nature or in his convenience to bestow, and very frequently that is given which the other party did not want, did not seek for, and cannot be benefited by having. To make these facts quite clear, let us just recollect the difference between what we generally give for charitable purposes, or when a person really in need of a favour applies for it, and what we are in the habit of expending when we are anxious to entertain or give a present to a person of our own or a superior rank, who neither requires

nor requests it. It is not unreasonable to say, that we give to the necessitous in copper and silver, to the non-necessitous in gold. But, indeed, the remark is much older than our day, and must be familiar to every one, that the surest way to obtain a favour is to seem not to need it; the converse of which is, that, if we really need, we never get, all mankind being bent only on favouring those who can make a suitable return, or upon whose minds, at least, they desire to make an impression favourable to themselves. Now, if favours are not conferred in a right spirit, how is it to be expected that in a right spirit they should be received?

No doubt, many persons who were succoured in need, and from a spirit of pure benevolence, have made an ungrateful return. But then we should recollect, that the very circumstance of having been obliged to accept a favour, however put up with in the moment of need, is almost sure afterwards to produce a feeling of such an uneasy kind, that men naturally endeavour to lessen the favour in their own recollection, and, upon any feasible excuse, to throw it off altogether. Persons in the way of conferring favours tell us that there is always enough of gratitude at the time when the favour is conferred, or so long as its beneficial effect is felt, but that it always grows fainter and fainter, until at last it dies quite away, or even degenerates (and this is what surprises them most) into a feeling of absolute dislike and hostility. It may be said, in palliation of this charge, that the perpetual homage which is implied by gratitude is a price so dear, that men cannot be properly expected to pay it for any kind of favour. There ought most unquestionably to be a limit to the duration of this deference of spirit, proportioned to the value and benefit of the action by which it was called for; otherwise, accepting a favour becomes equivalent to a selling of the soul into slavery. Now, is it not as often from an undue desire to continue this painful yoke upon the necks of those we have benefited, as from an undue desire on their

part to shake it off, that we complain of ingratitude? Is it not in general from actual suffering under this yoke that the persons benefited have at last conceived a feeling of dislike towards their benefactors, and expressed it in actions the very reverse of those which were expected? And, after all, is it clear, in any instance of a favour being conferred, which is the party from whom the gratitude is due? May not one man sacrifice more of his sense of dignity and independence in being the apparent receiver, than the other sacrifices of a meaner kind of property in being the apparent giver; and may not the latter have the most pleasure and benefit in proportion to the expenditure? At the very best, the thing bargained for by the giver is of a vague and indefinite nature, and there is nothing so natural, as, where the price is not exactly defined, for the parties afterwards to fall out about the settlement.

The spirit in which favours ought to be conferred, and in which they are conferred by all really good and rational persons, is one which in a great measure precludes the expectation of gratitude. Good should be done for its own sake, and not from any paltry motive of interest; neither from a desire of bringing back good to ourselves, nor from a wish to acquire a sense of superiority over those we benefit, nor for any other reason or object whatever, than simply that evil may be obviated, and that the great ends of the Giver of all Good may be served. In order to make a good action perfect, it would almost be requisite that we did not know what individual was the better of it, so that it might run no risk of being diminished or depreciated by our afterwards solacing ourselves with the incense of a humbled man's thanks. Let us be as much as possible the unseen instruments of good; and the benefited persons, though they might have fretted under a sense of obligation to us their fellow worms, will repay it a hundredfold by the devotion which it will excite in their hearts towards the Deity who gave us the means and inspired us with the wish to aid them.

LISTENERS.

GOLDEN opinions are often to be gained by discreet silence. Some people delight exceedingly to hear themselves talk, but above all things are captivated with the respectful attention of a steady listener; and whoever has the patience to sit and hear them out (that is, not absolutely to wait until they stop of their own accord—for perhaps there is no well authenticated instance of any thing of that kind—but till something occurs to interrupt them), obtains their good will far more certainly than if he had communicated to them a vast variety of important information, or taken a world of pains to correct their mistaken notions. A character for the most engaging modesty falls inevitably to the lot of him who possesses the power of holding his tongue; the praises of his discernment are every where sounded; nay, he often acquires a reputation for conversational abilities; it is true, with regard to this latter point, that doubts are sometimes expressed by some who have been whole nights in his company without hearing him utter more than a few syllables: but the interminable talker—the never-failing patron of silent gentlemen—forgetful of his own fame in his zeal for that of his client, declares that good talents for conversation do not consist in the multiplication of sentences, but in speaking succinctly to the purpose. Advantages more substantial than favourable regards do also frequently accrue to the possessor of this qualification: it were endless to recount how many large fortunes have been secured by persons, male and female, in the fifth, sixth, and seventh degrees of kin, who day after day for years had the fortitude to submit their ears to the recital of the same stories and remarks from an old invalid bachelor relation. And far be it from us to maintain that in this respect the effect did not most naturally and most justly follow the cause. People who have become rich in this manner enjoy indeed no high repute with the world; they are commonly re-

proached with having meanly subjected their minds for a number of years to a servile acquiescence with all the caprices of him whom they courted through no attachment to his person, but with the precarious expectation of coaxing from him a magnificent legacy. This no doubt is more or less the case. We believe, however, that when two persons live long together, their intercourse for the most part assumes a kindlier character than that between a haughty lord and an obsequious dependent. The wants to which we daily administer beget in us pity for him who needs assistance—satisfaction with ourselves in being able to relieve them—and a degree of affection for the individual who thus engrosses so much of our care. Gratitude in the other party for dutiful services and increased comforts is a still stronger and more obvious bond of union. This is true, whether the services performed have regard to the case of a decayed body, or the amusement of a mind that cannot find employment within itself. If single gentlemen who have made quarter-plums, half-plums, and plums, without cultivating elegant tastes, the exercise of which might relieve the weariness of an unoccupied old age, were to retire from the bustle of action or business, and to find nobody upon whom to bestow their garrulity, their days would be dreary and wretched in the extreme. Whoever, therefore, lightens the tedium of their afternoons, confess upon them whatever happiness they enjoy, and they cannot extend their liberality to any one who better deserves it.

Valuable listeners are seldom to be found of an advanced age. When people get established in life, and have amassed a share of substance and experience, they begin to feel their own weight—to think their opinions merit consideration as well as those of others—and that they are entitled to “deliver their sentiments at length on the subject.” As their wealth and wisdom are further increased, what they say assumes the tone of incontrovertible maxims rather than that of persuasion or argument. By and bye they cannot bear to be contradicted, and in a little time longer

you will hear it whispered that they have become intolerable proser. This gradation is not in every instance true to the letter: multitudes of veterans retain the candour, the simplicity, and almost the vivacity of youth, to their latest years. But somehow or other a man of that period of life is never pitched upon as a person proper to receive the full details of a very long story, which in general cannot be heard with a zest of attention and admiration sufficient to gratify the narrator, unless by the inexperience of the young, which "holds each strange tale devoutly true."

Yet there is a method by means of which talkers frequently contrive to enlist auditors of any age: you have a piece of urgent business, and, going to the person with whom it is to be transacted, lay the whole affair before him: it may be of equal importance to him, but perceiving of what consequence it is to you, and being a proser, he answers, "Well, well; we'll talk of that presently: but did you hear of our famous dinner last night?" You in vain endeavour to get off by saying that you read a full account of the proceedings in the newspapers this morning; he protests there never was such a negligent or partial set as the reporters—they have omitted or misrepresented the whole of his speech: and he goes on mercilessly to inflict upon you the entire oration, from the "Gentlemen, unacquainted as I am with public speaking," down to the resolution which he in vain attempted to persuade the "numerous and respectable company" to adopt; concluding with a supplementary address to yourself, to prove the ruinous consequences that must inevitably ensue from the rejection of his proposal. Having fully disburdened his mind upon you, notwithstanding your looks of agony, and the unsettled manner in which you occupy your chair, he then perhaps recurs to the matter in dependence between you and him, and you obtain a satisfactory arrangement, which would certainly have been postponed if you had been altogether refractory, and declined to hear the mighty matter with which his mind was labouring. I remember

hearing the advice of a wine-merchant, in very extensive business, to his son, which is very much to the present purpose. It is very well known that many of the transactions of wholesale merchants with their country customers are managed by "travellers," as they call themselves, or "bagmen," as they are derisively termed by those whose wit is not too refined to prevent them from making a joke of a man's profession. The sons of the merchants themselves are often employed in this manner, not only to give them a knowledge of every part of their profession, but to introduce them to a personal acquaintance with those who deal with "the house." From a journey of this kind the young man alluded to had just returned; and his father asked him, among other things, "Well, Tom, and how much are we to send to my friend the Provost of Sybo?" "He did not favour me with an order," replied Tom, evidently a little chagrined to confess his want of success in that quarter. "Did not favour you with an order!" exclaimed his father; "there must have been some very particular reason for that." "Why," was the answer, "when I told him our vintages, he would talk of nothing but provincial politics. The conduct of Deacon Farlane at the last election, he assured me, was perfectly infamous. I begged him to look over the catalogue, and select such supplies as he required. He begged to refer it to me if it was not a most base thing in a man first to pledge himself to one party, and then to vote for the other; and went on to enumerate a host of his fellow-citizens who had been guilty of that delinquency. Perceiving there was no end to his vehemence, I informed him civilly, that, as I had a number of other calls to make, it would be obliging if he would honour me with any orders he had to give. 'Very well, young man,' he said, 'nothing is wanted at present; but give my respects to my old friend your father, who did not use to speak of making other calls the first night he came to my house.' And so," concluded Tom, "I took my leave." "Tom, Tom!" said his father, on hearing

this explanation, "I don't know what you'll make of the business when it comes into your hands; but if you wish to sell wine with success, you must be content to listen to a great deal that people have to say on other subjects; and if you do so respectfully, ten to one but they will take a larger quantity than they at first intended. It will not do to go about and cry, 'Wine, wine!—how much shall we send you?' I must set out to Sybo to-morrow, and keep the worthy Provost a customer of the house, as long at least as I am a partner in it."

THE PARTED.

THOUGH nothing can be more honourable than opulence acquired by industry, it often happens in a large manufacturing town, that individuals spring from a penurious origin to the possession of enormous wealth, without acquiring those generous habits of thinking and feeling which alone can render affluence respectable. Pinched and scorned in their early days, they contract a notion that the opposite of all evil is in the mere exemption from poverty; that all men who do not make money are either imbecile or dissolute; and that they are in no danger of offending against any of the rules of life, if they only keep their gold from waste.

Old James Bisset was a person of this kind who flourished a considerable number of years ago in Glasgow—a city which, though containing many men who have alike gained fortunes by honourable means, and enjoy them in a creditable manner, must necessarily be the habitation of some others, characterised in the way we have described. The individual we are alluding to had originally been a small shop-keeper. Lucky turns in trade, joined to indefatigable industry, ultimately enabled him to become the principal

shareholder and director of a bank, in which line of business he realised a fortune which was literally beyond calculation. Day after day, with the most pertinacious regularity, did he assume his seat in a small screened space in the telling-room, where he was ready, without appearing publicly, to be consulted on all occasions of difficulty. With what a knowing air would he handle any odd kind of bill that was presented to him! How keenly, and yet at the same time coldly, would he inspect signatures which he was not very much in the habit of seeing! Were the presentee a somewhat embarrassed trader, struggling, by means of bills, to avert the destruction which they only rendered the more certain and deadly, James was sure to have heard some *inkling* (to use one of his own phrases) of what was going forward, and the answer accordingly was given, with a polite smirk, enough to sink the victim into the earth, "It is not just convenient." Were the applicant a young man recently entered into business, and not very well off for capital, then, whatever might be his personal merit, whatever his industry, whatever his prospects in trade, it was, "We do not know the parties." The first time I saw Bisset was in his own bank. He happened to come forth from his den, to say something to a clerk, and I took him fully into my eye as he crossed the floor. There he was, with his neat person, marked with a dash of the antique—his substantial west of England black *stand of clothes*, small silver buckles at the knees, clear black shoes, and white scanty hair—the very bean-ideal of a close careful man, of rigid uprightness and propriety in all things, but—no feeling. If, thought I, this man hath a daughter, how difficult to get a man good enough for her! If he have a son, how impossible for that son to "be every thing that his father could desire!" In this man's estimation, the world must be a scene of almost unmixed unworthiness. Not one man in five hundred will be any thing in his eyes. If the whole of mankind were worth a plum each, it would be paradise once more. But there being

few so very good, it must be like the doomed city, with not nearly a sufficient exception of respectability to save it from general contempt. How, thought I, would this man act if he had a child in the situation of Belvidera, or Juliet, or Ophelia !—for, strange as it may seem, even this hardened mass of feelingless clay might quite well, in the course of nature, be the father of some being, matching, in softness, and affection, and sensibility, all or any one of those creatures of the imagination.

There were, as I afterwards learned, some circumstances in the family of Mr Bisset, which had tried his heart in a way not far different from what I was supposing—but found it wanting. He had but one daughter, Anne, who had married a person of her own rank some years before, when her father was as yet but a rising and struggling man. This person, whose name was Inglis, prosecuted business for years with success, but eventually, owing to the rise in his style of living, which the ambition of his wife demanded, in order to keep pace with her father's advancing greatness, while that father would never render his son-in-law the least assistance, he became—to use a well-understood phrase of delicacy—unfortunate. The ruin of the son-in-law produced hardly a changed muscle in old Bisset. He only remarked, one day, that he had never had any very good opinion of that frequent advertising practised by Mr Inglis, and had often told him so, but without effect. “And then his own extravagance,” said the old gentleman, with a generous forbearance of all further explanation. This coldness, however, would not do. Bisset soon found, that, if Inglis could not support his wife and his children, he would be obliged to support his daughter and his grandchildren ; and he therefore allowed himself the luxury, and claimed from the world the merit, of doing his son-in-law the great kindness of setting him once more up in business. His advances, however, were in such a form as to give him a complete dominion over Inglis, so long as they were not repaid—a power he exercised to its fullest extent, in pesti-

lent and querulous interferences in every movement made by his son-in-law. The consequence was, that the young man lost heart, and really became guilty of the very errors which Bisset wished him to avoid. His business, which at first showed some symptoms of revival, began to decline ; ordinary obligations were answered with some difficulty ; and application was made for further advances to Bisset, who, so far from granting them, was only incited to look more sharply after what he had already given. Finally, to gain some paltry preferences upon the estate of his son-in-law, he forced him a second time into the pit of ruin, from which, of course, a second redemption was not to be hoped for. "Far better," said Bisset, "to support my daughter and her family by a direct outlay, than vainly endeavour, at an infinitely greater cost, to keep her up through the means of that rascally dog of a husband."

Inglis, who was in reality a man of good dispositions, though of soft and rather indolent character, was never able, after this event, to hold his face up in the world. Mortified more by the cruelty of his wealthy relative than even by his disagreeable position in mercantile society, he sunk for a time into dissipated habits, and was accordingly given up for lost by all his former friends. The world was at the same time partly aware of the severity with which he had been treated, and seemed fully disposed to pity and befriend him ; but, as it invariably happens, any good that might have arisen from this state of public feeling, was neutralised by the impossibility of relying upon the conduct of the man himself—for how can any employer, or any one who has credit to dispense, depend upon the behaviour of a tippler ?—a man who may to-day contract obligations with the full and conscientious design of fulfilling them honourably, but whose best resolutions may be dissipated to-morrow before the temptation of that meanest of all indulgences, a dram ! Thus Inglis went down, and down, and down, without the least power, apparently, to avert his own decline. His father-in-law had never seen him since the

period of his second failure. He pretended that he could not endure to look upon a man who had injured him so much, and whose conduct was so far from reputable. His daughter he proposed to take home into his own house, along with her children, amounting to four in number, but only on the strict understanding that she was never again to meet her husband.

Mrs Inglis was one of a somewhat uncommon class of women, but who, nevertheless, *are* a class—cold, tame, and self-indulgent; capable of discharging carefully the most of the minor duties of life, and even, perhaps, notable for good general behaviour, but who are totally unfit, when called upon, to act upon high and self-denying principles. Her husband she liked well enough; but then she liked her father too. She would have been well content to continue living with her husband; but then his circumstances were not such that she could live with him. And the children—what was she to do with them? Ought she not rather to leave her husband, in order to ensure their support and comfort, than stay with him, and see them subjected to all conceivable hardships? In short, she found far more than the requisite excuse to commit the *great sin* of parting with her husband on the terms proposed by her father. She went to the enjoyment of every luxury that tongue could name or heart desire, to bring up her children like the sons of princes, and to be the fondled pet of a doating father, who could never see wrong in either her sayings or her doings; while he whom she had sworn never to part from, for any thing that the world could either give or take away—the father, too, of those children, the being with whom she had once seemed to share an absolute community of existence—was shred away from her like a noxious weed, and left to find his own solitary and cheerless way through the world, with no hope except in the correcting vengeance of that Deity whose laws she had so shamelessly violated.

Inglis now became a thorough prey to fortune. For a

while, but only a little while, after their parting, his wife was worked upon by his written solicitations to send him small sums of money, which she had saved off the allowance made to her by her father; and she even ventured on one occasion, at the risk of being turned out of her splendid house, to pay a stolen visit to her unhappy partner, at a time when he was supposed to be dangerously ill. Soon, however, even this intercourse ceased. Exposed every day to hear her father's sentiments respecting Inglis, she insensibly became hardened towards him, looking upon herself, and her children, and her father, as forming a particular system by themselves—one of great magnificence and unimpeachable virtue and propriety—and her husband as a poor and disreputable object, which was quite alien to the former. Then came a time when the sight of her shabby husband would occasionally cross her sight on the streets, to wither all the enjoyments amidst which she lived, and she would shrink away from the accusing spectacle, like a murderer from the sight of blood—thinking that every eye in the surrounding crowds was intent in estimating the contrast between her own luxurious condition and the abject misery of one who was still, let her do what she would, a part of herself. Then came a time when her children, growing up to observation of the world, would ask if they also, as well as their companions, had a father?—and where was he?—and would they ever see him?—and would he bring them home play-things, like other fathers whom they named, who were long from home?—questions that, like lashes, brought each away a piece of the very flesh along with it, though rather by the humiliation they inflicted, than any feeling of remorse. One day, the eldest girl, who contrary to custom had been permitted to wander into the town, came home quite breathless with surprise and haste, saying that she had been seized on the street and hurried into an alley by a horrid-looking man, who called himself her father, and insisted on kissing her several times, which, when she resisted, with

cries that alarmed some people who were passing, he set her down hurriedly, and ran away out of sight, leaving her, she said, with her face all covered with his tears. Still greater care was taken thereafter to prevent the children from wandering out of sight; but not long after, as the gay and gorgeous lady was stopping in her carriage at a shop in Argyle Street, with her four beautifully dressed children around her, Catherine suddenly started up, and, pointing to some one on the pavement, cried, "There, mamma!—there is the bad man who called himself my father!" And on her involuntarily turning to the object thus indicated, her eyes were met by another pair, so wild, so mournful, and so full of painful meanings, that she had hardly breath to ask the coachman to drive on.

A time at length came when this very child was seized with what appeared a mortal illness. Both mother and grandfather were watching over her in a state of inexpressible grief, and every moment was expected to be her last. At the height of their sorrow, a hurried but subdued knocking was heard at the outer door, and presently after there arose the sound of a scuffle between the servant and some one who wished to make a forcible entrance. "Shall I not see my own child?" cried a hoarse and broken voice, which, all altered as it was, they knew too truly to be that of the unfortunate Inglis, and presently after he burst wildly into their presence. The lady fainted, and, while Bisset stood trembling with rage in the middle of the floor, the desperate man approached the bed of the dying infant, whom he took tenderly in his arms, and kissed with the most affectionate fervour. "What right—by what—what right," cried Bisset, almost choking with passion, "do you make this intrusion? Sir, I tell you, you have no right to be here." And he stopped from absolute inability to command his voice. "I have a right to be here," replied Inglis, after having carefully laid down the child. "Your house, perhaps, and yourself, and these staring servants there, are not in any way under my control; but to this

child, sir, I have a right. She is mine, by the laws of both God and man, and I could this moment take her for ever from your sight, even were you to see her gasp her last in my arms before we reached the door. You know this, sir; and, cruel and base as you are, you cannot dispute it. Nor that lady there," he added, with a bitter sneer, "when she revives from her amiable trepidation, could she deny it either."

"In the name of God, then," said the miser, awed by the very wrath of his wronged son-in-law, "what do you mean to do? Your violence, however we may bear it, must be most distressing to this dying innocent, and may even prove the immediate cause of her death. Would it not be better that you quietly retired, now that you have seen what you wanted to see?"

The unhappy man could make no answer. His eye was fixed in silence upon his child, whose countenance at this moment began to exhibit the unequivocal symptoms of coming dissolution. "My Catherine—my Catherine!" he cried, and next moment clasped a lifeless corpse. A few minutes thereafter, rendered unresisting apparently by his intense grief, he permitted himself to be led peaceably to the door, and gave the afflicted house no more trouble.

It is often of advantage to a man who has entered upon evil courses, that something should occur to give an agitation to his whole system of feeling. The shock of some tremendous grief, like a thunder-storm in the elements, seems to clear the mental atmosphere, and fit him for once more commencing, if his passions will permit, the career of virtue. Inglis, apparently reformed, now proceeded to Edinburgh, where he had no evil reputation to contend with, and, on the strength of a small sum communicated to him, in a letter of partial kindness, by his wife, opened a school for such branches of education as he found himself qualified to teach. The attempt, though unprosperous at first, was beginning to be attended with some small share of success—his manners being, at the same time,

observed to continue quite irreproachable—when he was seized by a severe chronic disease, which disabled him for a whole winter, and left him, at the return of spring, without a penny in his pocket, or a pupil in his academy. His life, after this disaster, was one unbroken scene of distresses, pecuniary and otherwise, and, but for the slender succour which was occasionally rendered to him by the good will, rather than the ability, of his poor neighbours, he must have died of hunger. The unfortunate always herd with the unfortunate ; the unfortunate are to the unfortunate almost a sole refuge and shelter ; the unfortunate alone can judge of and feel for the unfortunate ; while no other can properly be to them either a companion, or a benefactor, or a judge. Inglis, while deserted by a wife, the crumbs of whose luxury would have been to him an ample furnishing, and overlooked by all men who were once his equals, found in those who were nearly as destitute as himself, the only friendship he ever experienced, the only true sympathy for his condition, the only alms that any one would give. Blessings, double blessings, be on the generous poor !

It happened in the revolutions of life, that an intimate friend of the writer of this narrative became acquainted with the story and circumstances of the unfortunate Inglis, and was able to do something for the alleviation of his many troubles. He found him to be, upon the whole, a man of an inoffensive character, of some acuteness of mind, and more than the average of information, but outworn with past excesses, and the attrition of a perpetual grief. He spoke little of his misfortunes or of his family ; but one day, being rather more depressed than usual, and the cause being asked, he said he had just heard that his second son, whom he had not seen for many years, was about to come to the capital, for the purpose of studying for the bar ; and being certain that the young man would be there without ever inquiring for his father, or perhaps being aware of his existence, he had experienced more than usual dis-

tress of mind from the consideration of his extraordinary circumstances. My friend could not help acknowledging, that, even after enduring so much, a new circumstance, involving so unnatural an association of ideas, might well be expected to give him additional uneasiness.

This ill-used man at length died in a humble lodging, where he existed solely upon charity; and his wife, being written to on the occasion, replied by the simple transmission of a sum of money sufficient to bury him and discharge his little debts. No notice was taken of the event by his family. His widow wore her usual gay dresses; his children were not even informed of their loss; his name was "never heard."

God, however, in due time, seemed (as far as mortals might be permitted to interpret his decrees) to manifest his sense of this unholy violation of one of his earliest and most solemn injunctions. The children, in whom the mother and grandfather took so much delight, were one after another snatched away by the various diseases of childhood and youth, till not one was left to console their age, or inherit the wealth which had so absurdly been hoarded for them. The loss, it may well be supposed, was mourned with tears of double bitterness, for it was impossible to take such a calamity as an occurrence altogether within the ordinary course of nature. The lady was so much exhausted by her exertions for her children, that she took ill immediately after the death of the last, and mental anguish aiding in the progress of her malady, she did not live many weeks. Bisset, who apparently had never thought it possible that he could be predeceased by his daughter and so many blooming children, was, by this event, struck with a kind and degree of grief altogether foreign to his nature. He yet survives—but only as a spectacle to excite the pity of those who know him. Palsied, fatuous, and blind, he is nothing but a living block; nor can all his gold, immense as it is in amount, reflect one consoling ray on his decline. His wealth, which, if well used, might have spared him the

life of the only being he ever loved, and kept other hearts besides from breaking, will speedily be dispersed among a number of distant relatives, who neither care for its present owner, nor will be advantaged, perhaps, by its possession.

LONG LIVERS.

HUMAN life is not so short, but that very distant ages, or ages at least very different in character from each other, are sometimes strangely connected by the existence of an individual of the species. The progress of civilisation, and the improvement of all the arts of life, is in this country so rapid, that no one who has survived to even middle life can fail to observe the great difference between his early and his latter days. How greatly, however, is the wonder increased, when we find persons who can look back for the better part, if not the whole of a century, and describe a state of things as having obtained in their young days, which is so entirely unlike any thing we now see around us, that it appears like a chapter of ancient history, narrated by an eye-witness, who has, by some strange chance, survived the general wreck! At the present time, for instance, there must be individuals alive, who, in the midst of all the enlightenment, and all the conveniences and appliances, for which the age takes so much credit—in this age of intellect, in short—recollect a time when there was *no intellect*, or at most *very little*, and when men of course lived a very strange sort of life. We are accustomed to regard the question of the Stuart dynasty as altogether a seventeenth century question—a thing quite foreign to our feelings and associations: yet people must still live, who not only recollect the pretensions of that family being defended by a respectable party, but saw a prince of the line invade the country, and, with a band of

primitive people, who still kept alive manners, dress, and language, that had existed since before the days of the Romans, sweep through the island almost from end to end, in quest of the throne. We look upon Sir Robert Walpole as a man of quite a different day from this; and certainly one who was born in 1676, and suffered imprisonment in the Tower as an unruly member of parliament in Queen Anne's time, is entitled to be so considered. Yet, if I am not mistaken, a daughter of his, Lady Katherine Walpole, appeared in our newspaper obituaries only about two years ago. Her father died in 1745. Our own present Duke of Montrose is but the grandson of a man who bore the family honours in the year 1684, in the reign of King Charles the Second—nearly one hundred and fifty years ago—though it is curious, that, during the thirty-four preceding years, the same number of generations had borne them. What a difference between the circumstantial world of the grandfather and that of the grandson! Persons yet alive may recollect old Countess Margaret of Roxburghe, whose husband was drowned in the Gloucester frigate, coming down to Scotland with the Duke of York in 1682! She died so lately as 1753, a widow of seventy-one years. I have heard that Sir Ilay Campbell, who died in 1811, had conversed with an ancestor who had witnessed the execution of Charles the First; the space between the death of the monarch and that of the gentleman who had seen the witness of his execution, was a hundred and sixty-two years. Sir Walter Scott's mother, who died in 1820 or 1821, had spoken to a woman who recollected seeing Oliver Cromwell when in Scotland—or rather his nose, for she remembered nothing else about him. This was still more wonderful than the case of Sir Ilay Campbell, for the space between Cromwell's last departure from Scotland to fight the battle of Worcester in August 1651, and the death of the lady whose friend had seen him, was a hundred and seventy years! Such facts, though quite within the range of nature, and perhaps oc-

curing not unfrequently, strike the mind with a kind of wonder—for they bring together into one idea, two ideas remotely different, and for a moment clasp the associations of a rude and unsettled age with those of one in every respect orderly and refined. It soothes us, moreover, with a pleasing notion of the extent of what we generally complain of as too short, namely, human life, and affords the encouraging idea that man or his immediate children may witness more of the effects of his own good work than is generally expected.

In the above instances, I have alluded to the phenomena which two long lives occasionally present. There are cases, however, in which one produces wonders almost as great. When George IV. visited Scotland, one of the individuals who came to bid him welcome and kiss his hand, was Patrick Grant, a Braemar Highlander, who had fought against his dynasty at Falkirk and Culloden, and been present at the melancholy embarkation of the defeated Chevalier for France. The old man remarked, with a tact worthy of a court, that he was perhaps the last of his majesty's enemies now alive. The king gave him a pension, which he enjoyed till his death, in February 1824, aged 111 years, when three pipers marshalled him to the grave, playing a tune which had been a favourite with his brethren insurgents in 1745. This civil war is still, on account of the curious contrast which it presents to the present state of things, a subject of constant allusion and recollection in Scotland. I may therefore refer to one or two other lives by which its wonders have been, as it were, brought into the presence of the existing generation. A venerable lady, Mrs K. of C., who died last year, and till her last displayed an almost juvenile vivacity and cheerfulness, remembered having been put into mourning for her cousin, a young gentleman of Prince Charles's army, who fell in the manner of the unfortunate Balmawhapple (though in no other respect did he resemble that personage), in the pursuit which followed the victory at Prestonpans. A distinguished ex-judge of the Court of

Session, who still lives in Edinburgh,* is the *cousin-german* of one of the chieftains who led out their clans in that memorable year, and nephew to a gentlewoman who was seized and taken prisoner to London for having concealed the Chevalier. This individual entered the faculty of advocates in the year 1765, and may consequently be said to have been nearly seventy years connected with the court. There also lives at the present time in the New Town, a lady who recollects having been taken, when a child of about seven years, to see the Stuart court revived at Holyroodhouse: a Highland chieftain came out of the porch, and, with infantine wonderment at his appearance, she took hold of his kilt; her maid was astonished, when, instead of killing her with his dirk, he stooped down and clapped the child on the head. This lady remembers distinctly many of the Gaelic phrases used by the soldiers to each other on the streets of the city, and especially at the Netherbow Port; where they kept a guard. *Greshort*—make haste—was one of those most frequently in use, as might be expected from the hurried and adventurous nature of the whole affair. For some years past, many recently deceased Highlanders have been successively chronicled in the newspapers, as the last survivors of all who were engaged in that enterprise. Every forty-five hero who died, was naturally supposed by all who knew no other, to be almost for certain the last. The *last*, however, would appear to be still alive, if even he be alone in this curious historical distinction. The person I allude to is Andrew Wallace, who lives, or very lately lived, in Chester county, Pennsylvania, at the age of one hundred and three. He was born at Inverneas in 1730, fought at the battle of Culloden on the side of Prince Charlie, and, in 1752, emigrated to America. He has since then fought in all the American wars, and was discharged so lately as 1813, after having been nearly seventy

* Sir William Macleod Bannatyne. He died in November 1833, three months after the publication of the above paper.

years a soldier. He enjoys a pension of twenty-six cents per diem from the American government, and has a wife and two children, the younger about fifteen years of age.

If we go back a few years, we find persons in extreme senility, whose association with proportionately earlier ages was equally remarkable. Dean Swift's curate died so late as 1797;* the dean himself had expired at a great age in 1744. The widow of the famous Lord Lovat (born in 1666, and executed in 1748) died in 1796, a hundred and thirty years after the birth of her husband.† In March 1787, Torquil Macleod died in the Isle of Lewis, at one hundred and thirteen: he had been engaged in every battle fought for the house of Stuart since the Revolution, nearly a century before, namely, Killiecrankie, Sheriffmuir, and those of the Forty-five. If he had lived to July 1789, he would have survived his first battle a hundred years! Martha Hanna, however, who died so lately as 1808, remembered hearing the shots fired in one of the engagements during the residence of King James in Ireland—an incident nearly contemporaneous with the first battle fought by this aged islander. What an interval of improvement in every thing (at least for Britain) between the event of which Martha recollected, and her death! Not many years ago, a woman, named Margaret Wylie, aged one hundred and thirteen years, was assisting at haymaking, in a field at Lawston, near Newcastleton, Roxburghshire, when it suddenly occurred to her that she had tedded hay in the very same place, when she was, as she expressed it, a gilpylassie. On considering the matter farther, it turned out, to the astonishment of all present, that the old woman had been employed exactly as she was now, on the same spot, and in the same day of the year, a *century before!* The scenery was the same: the hay was what hay always was and will be: there were also smiling

* The Rev. Bellingham Swan. He died at 102.

† What is equally strange, the widow of Lord Lovat's son, General Fraser, survived till February 1808.

LONG LIVERS.

a wife
 of age
 in extreme
 earlier ages
 died so late
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 (born in 1666,
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 In March 1787,
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 mployed exactly as she was
 he same day of the year, a
 was the same: the day was
 be: there were also smiling

died at 102.
 of Lord Lovat's son, General Fraser.

rubrics around her now as then. But ho-
 self!—a single withered leaf in the midst of
 How much had passed notelessly since then!
 What a retrospection!—an eighteenth part
 since the birth of Christ! In 1785, the
 hope, in Yarrow, a woman named Marion
 American war was then just concluded, and
 ginning to talk about Mr Pitt, the singular
 nister. Strange to say, this woman had
 the year 1682, in the house wherein she d-
 and famous Mr Renwick, who suffered de-
 after in the Grassmarket, on account of
 Thus were the reigns of Charles the Second
 the Third, so essentially different, brought
 lar life into conjunction. Marion Renwick
 under eight sovereigns, counting William and
 and she had seen the Revolution, the union
 and Scotland, the accession of the Brunswick
 various civil wars in favour of the house of
 other political events of signal importance.
 Poland defend Christendom against the
 vided, like a spoil, among three of the
 had defended. Another of those ancient
 the old Countess of Loudoun, whom Dr
 on his tour to Scotland. She died in 1777,
 dred. Her father was that Earl of Stair who
 massacre of Glencoe in 1691; and her father,
 ther, the first Earl of Loudoun, had figured
 affairs in Scotland during the civil war, and
 net to have once been ordered for a secret
 Tower by Charles the First. Her ladyship
 her marriage seventy-seven years.

A very remarkable beggar appeared on
 Edinburgh in the year 1770. He had a
 dignified and venerable appearance, and ge-
 headed under a dead-wall in the Canon-gate
 being made into his history, it turned out

attainted baronet, named Sir John Mitchell of Pitreavie, who had early in life been an officer in the Scots Greys, but was broke for sending a challenge to the Duke of Marlborough, which he was provoked into by some expressions used by his grace in contempt of the Scottish nation. A subscription was opened on behalf of the venerable unfortunate; but we are not acquainted with its success, or with his subsequent history.

If we go back into a period somewhat earlier, we shall meet with stretches of human existence quite as remarkable. A clergyman, named James Ker, died minister of a parish in Roxburghshire, in 1694—therefore might have been conversed with by Marion Renwick, who lived almost to our own times. Now, this man had been ordained as a clergyman a year before the death of James the First of Great Britain—that is, seventy years before; and, what is still more remarkable, he had for all this time been minister of but one parish, except during the triumph of episcopacy. As he could hardly fail to have been born before the king went to reign in England, we may assume that his life, and that of Marion Renwick, bring us almost into contact with those early days, so different from our own, when Scotland had a distinct king and court. All these instances, however, sink into insignificance compared with that of Henry Jenkins, who died in 1670, at the age of 169. Jenkins must have recollected the reign of Henry the Seventh, who closed the wars of the Roses, and ended the feudal times in England. The events of the Reformation must have been the historical panorama that passed before his eyes in what is generally considered middle life, but which to him was as early childhood. He must have recollected every thing that happened in the sixteenth century, including all the glories of Elizabeth, and almost every thing in the seventeenth too. The lives and recollections of several generations of men were, in a manner, packed into the individual person of this wonderful patriarch: he was an epitome of several ages of history. He must have

at length seen so many of the changes wrought by the passions and reason of mankind, that nothing they did would astonish him. "Ah," I can imagine him saying to a modern, who talked of the execution of the regicides, "if you had but seen the fires of Smithfield!" The friends of his early days must have been so long perished from the face of the earth, that they would look like the creatures of a dream; and his very descendants must have at length become almost as alien to him as ordinary strangers. He would seem to himself like a weed cast out upon the shore of human existence, which no returning tide had ever been able to reach; and his memory, like a lachrymatory, could be filled with only the relics of sorrow. In short, a man under Jenkins's circumstances would be the most solitary and friendless of created beings; and his protracted existence would only give him occasion to feel more acutely the inherent pains and drawbacks which attend the condition of mortal life.

NELLY BALLANTYNE.

NELLY BALLANTYNE was one of a class of persons to whom allusion was made in the article entitled "TURNERS"—a decent old widow, maintaining herself, in a creditable way, as the mistress of a small public-house in one of the villages near Edinburgh. Her lowly whitewashed hostelry was for many years a favourite resort of the lovers of fruit in summer, and the lovers of skating in winter, and *turners* all the year round. It was a great *Saturday house*—that is to say, a number of decent stoutish gentlemen who had offices in the Register House or the Exchequer, and did not get much abroad during the week, liked to come out to see Nelly on the afternoon of the last day of the week, which, after the manner of their ancestors, they always kept sacred to recreation. Nelly knew her men well enough, and

having a neighbour who washed to some of them, was always timeously apprised, by means of that intelligencer, if it was likely that any of "the gentlemen" would be thinking of a sheep's head on Saturday. Not that any decided order was ever given—far from it; only good Mr Baird of the Sasine Office, on receiving his bundle of fresh linen about the Thursday evening, would hint that he had not been taking a walk for a long time; he must really see and get one or two out with him, after the office shut on Saturday, and they would perhaps see what Nelly Ballantyne was about. Nelly knew, therefore, what it beseeemed her to do; and if the sheep's head was not fully ripe in the pot by three o'clock, her stars were more at fault than she. Just at that hour exactly, the point of Mr Baird's stick, as he carried it swivel-fashion in his hand, would be seen coming round the corner, followed speedily by his own portly person, and a straggling group of perspiring friends, who carried a demand of spirits and water in their very faces, and one and all declared the roads to be remarkably dusty. If Nelly was not in the trance to receive them, she was sure to be in the spence; but whether present or not—without even the assurance that she was in the house, or in the world—the foremost of the party would say, with a curious singing accented voice, "Well, Nelly, how are ye to-day?" and so would push into *the* room, where the neatly spread table, with a heap of white plates rimmed with blue, a saltfoot of pewter filled with large-grained salt, and a stoneware pepper-pot, with a piece of paper twisted into the bottom of it, gave earnest of the coming fare.

Seldom had any party of this kind to wait long, when honest Nelly herself, dressed for the occasion in a clean white apron, and a new "toy" upon her head, would come in with the ample tureen, all as if she had previously learned the numbers and wishes of her guests by a kind of intuition. "Weel, Nelly, it's a gude head of course?" "Ye may say that, sir—a head far by ord'nar. A grand

black tup, sir—I waled him mysell frae amang a score—he had horns the like I never saw—the trotters just uncommon. I daur say a dizzen might dine on him, ae way and another.” No time for further colloquy just now. But after the broth, head, and trotters, had been alike discussed, and just as Nelly was going to close the door for the last time, that her guests might begin to their toddy, worthy Mr Lothian, seeing her “fissling” a little before taking wing, would accept the hint for the fiftieth time, and say, “But, Nelly, ye maun take a taste yoursell—sit ye down there;” and so would hand her the first glass that was filled. Nelly would then take a seat in a skittishly condescending way, and drink all their healths by name; after which, Mr Baird, or Mr Paterson, or Mr Abernethy, would ask how she had been getting on lately, and what “gentlemen” had been out seeing her, and how, in particular, her “dochter Bell” was. Nelly would then tell them that she was “aye fechtin’ away, the best way she could, to keep a house aboon her head; but ’deed there hadna been muckle doing for a lang time. Except a dinner last Saturday,” she would say, “two-three gentlemen o’ the Court o’ Session [macers, probably, celebrating the commencement of the vacation]—we have not had ony visitors by common this month past. The weather, ye see, has been gey backward, and gentlemen are feared to venture out this length. And I’m sure, last winter, it was just as ill the tither way; for there was never a day’s gude ice on the loch a’ the season; and except a gentleman that gaed down ower the head, and had to be brought in here to be dried, I dinna think we ever had either a skeytcher [skater] or a curler about the house. They say the Principal, honest man, was out *ae day*, but that was a’. ’Deed I think the seasons are gane clean gyte now a’thegither.”

Some one would interject, that although there might be little doing about the village, still Nelly got the best part of it, while her rivals did not appear to be prospering very greatly.

"Ou 'deed ay," she would answer, "I've great reason to be thankfu'. Mony a ane tries 't; but somehow or other, nane o' them ever comes to ony gude. There's ane set up the other day on the other side o' the road, just forenent my very door—a chield that likes whisky himself, and maybe thinks he'll at least mak his ain drink by 't. But I've seen them a' out as yet, and the auld widow will maybe see him out too."

Mr Lothian would remark, that she had now been a long time here in the way of business.

"Ay, sixteen years, sir, again' the neist Martinmas. I lost *him that's away* just the Lammas before, and there was nae other remeed for the bringing up o' five fatherless bairns but just to tak up the bit public. A' that time I've paid baith licence and taxes, and never been ahint five pounds to the merchant; and that's mak nor some o' my neebours can say."

In this kind o' chat would Nelly amuse her guests for a few minutes, and then, pretending to hear something going on which required her attention, would bustle away out of the room, and leave them to the serious business of the evening.

Mine hostess daikered on (to use her own phrase) for many years in her quiet and decently conducted hostel, paying scot and lot, and seeing one after another of her rivals sink into ruin and oblivion. There was hardly a clerk in any public office in Edinburgh who had not agreeable recollections of cheap and savoury treats enjoyed in her house on Saturday afternoons: and it was curious to remark, that although she would have been a total stranger to these gentlemen if met on the streets of the city, every one was her familiar friend when they entered her own house. This, be it observed, did not arise from any thing like haughtiness on their part: the actual fact was, that Nelly was part and parcel of a particular scene with which they were familiar, and, if seen any where else, her figure would not have been recognisable. In some instances,

however, she might be said to have established something beyond this holiday kind of friendship. By her neighbour Betty the washerwoman, she had perhaps sent a present of gooseberries now and then to Mrs Baird, or to Mrs Lothian; and although these worthy ladies never thought of calling to render their thanks in person, they would perhaps send the nursery-maid some day with her infantine charge, to take a walk that way, and pay Nelly a visit in passing. The consequence would be, that when the gentlemen next came to a Saturday dinner, she would burst out with, "Eh, Mr Baird, hoo muckle am I obleeged to Mrs Baird, for sending yon bonny bairn to see me! Sic a bairn I never saw—sic fine black een (like his mother's, I fancy), and how stoot for his age! Only eleven months and ten days, the maid said, and him nearly gaun his lane already. Eh, sic a fine bairn!" Thus familiar with her respectable guests, Nelly might rather be called their friend than their hostess.

Times at length changed with this poor but decent and honest woman. Severe as her struggle had been to bring her orphan family over the helpless period of childhood, she found that it was only when they grew up to maturity that they became seriously burdensome to her. The eldest lad—Matthew by name—had always been her favourite, and, spoilt by indulgences he did not deserve, turned out a very bad member of society. Originally apprenticed to a cartwright, he gradually sunk, through a great variety of employments, into the condition of an absolute profligate; associated with the most flagitious characters in the neighbouring city; was noted in the newspapers as one who called for the especial notice of the police; and every now and then came home to his mother to oppress her with his exactions, and wring her heart with his misconduct. James—the second son—was in every respect a superior character; had been a good scholar, and recommended himself, by his talent and good behaviour, to a respectable situation as a clerk: but, falling out of employment, and

being disgusted with his brother's conduct, which threatened the whole family with disgrace, he had been induced to emigrate to Canada ; nor did his mother hear of him for several years after, so that he was, to her, the same as if he had ceased to exist. The remaining children of the poor widow were daughters, all of whom, at a proper age, had been sent to act as house-servants in the neighbouring city. Such is the condition of life which presents itself to poor parents in general, as the only resource for the female part of their families ; though it is one not without its hazards and its disadvantages, and is generally encountered with some share of hesitation. So far as the mere duties of service are concerned, it is not perhaps looked upon with any trouble of mind ; for the general lot is one of mutual subserviency ; and it is only appropriate to the condition of the poor that their share of that lot should refer to humble offices in the households of the rich. There are other circumstances, however, attendant upon this condition, which no parent possessed of good feeling and good principle can regard without fear and real distress. He knows that the very creatures whom he looks upon with such fondness and estimation, whom he has taken pains to instruct in every upright principle, and whose temporal and eternal interests are alike so dear to him, are liable to be contemplated in the station to which he is forced to consign them, as only the fit ministers of unworthy pleasures, as creatures who come no one knows whence, and go no one knows whither, mere accidental and unconnected beings, responsible to no one for their fate, and for whose conduct there is no heart either to grieve or rejoice. He thinks of the miseries to which they are thus exposed, and the anguish which they may soon perhaps bring back upon himself, and, though not unhopeful of better things, sees them depart for their gayer and more dangerous home, with a regret and an alarm which, if it could be but imagined by those whom he dreads, would perhaps be the best protection of those whom he wishes, but is not able, to

protect. Such were, in part, the feelings of honest Nelly Ballantyne, when she sent her three daughters to "serve the fremmit"* in Edinburgh; and they were not unjustified by the event. The youngest and the fairest—"Bonnie Lizzie," as she had been called—became a waif and an outcast; while of the others only one could be considered as fortunate. This was Helen, who was married to a steady operative in the city, and became the mother of a large family, which, by economy and industry, she maintained in a creditable manner. The other daughter, Bell, was also married: but her husband proved a worthless sot, and, after having had three children, she found it absolutely necessary to separate from him, and take refuge in her mother's house. Thus, honest Nelly, after having, as she thought, got over the grand difficulty of her life, namely, the rearing of her orphan family, found herself, at an advanced age, more deeply and distressingly burdened than ever. Her son Matthew was a *downdraught* of the most odious kind—a monster who would coolly demand money from her, to save him from the consequences of criminal acts, which he described himself as having committed, and then go away to spend what he had thus wrung forth, in the basest indulgences, and amidst a troop of companions who were every now and then thinned by the law. On the other hand, Nelly was taxed with the entire maintenance of her daughter and grandchildren—it being impossible for the poor mother, occupied as she was with the care of three infants, to do any thing for her own or for their support. There was something not far removed from real pathos in the reflections which she occasionally indulged in respecting these circumstances. "I would think naething," she remarked one day to a friend, "of gieing Bell and her bairns a bite o' what I hae, if I could weel afford it—for bluid, ye ken, is aye thicker than water, and the bairns, puir things, are fine creatures, for a' the ill fa-

* Unrelated, not akin.

ther they hae, and it's just a pleasur to me to see them totting about, crying, 'Grannie, do this,' and 'Grannie, gie me that,' and no an ill thocht i' their heads. But oh, woman, it's a different thing wi' Matthew and Lizzie. I used to think, when their father left them a' young upon my hands, and the youngest no born yet, that few women had ever been trysted as I was : and mony a time did they anger me wi' their childish mischief, and broken lozens, and that kind o' thing. But though they angered me then, they never vexed me, as some o' them do now. If they could a' but be made bairns again—innocent thochtless bairns, aye dirtying themselves in dubs, and greeting for pieces,* and whyles gieing ane another a lick i' the lug† when they provoked ane another—I wad care little, woman, though they were twice the burden to me that they were langsyne."

It was soon found that the increased expenditure occasioned by these new exactions, was pressing too severely upon the resources of the honest widow ; and the consequence was, her inability to pay the rent, taxes, and licence, which formed her principal channels of disbursement. That unjustly but unavoidably detested race of men, the tax-gatherers, became her frequent visitors ; and though pity, aided by a dram, would for a while induce them to write a decent excuse on the back of the returned receipt, and so depart in peace, this could not be effectual for ever. The horrid sum—two pounds fourteen shillings and sevenpence—still remained due ; and still, once every week, re-appeared the awful officer at the door, with his small black leather portfolio, and his really unassuming, but, to Nelly's perceptions, most imperious and tyrannical countenance. "Ou, mistress, ye ken it's no my blame," the poor man would say ; "I maun just do as I'm bidden." But Nelly, though her reason assented to this proposition, always

* *Anglice*—Crying for crusts of bread.

† A slap on the ear.

found her feelings of quite a contrary opinion; and even while she invited the man to a civil glass of whisky, and wheedled him for yet a little more time, could not help thinking in her secret heart that he was the most atrocious villain on the face of the whole earth. "Weel, mistress," he at length told her one day, "this off-putting will do nae langer. There's five per cent. on already, and my expenses beside; and I hae nae a receipt sae scrawled on the back in my hale pocket-book. First, ye see, 'seventeenth May, says call again;' then, 'twenty-sixth May, has no money;' next, 'June second, will call in a day or two herself;' then again, 'June ninth, has just been paying a large account for porter;' after that, 'June fifteenth, says call again next week;' then cam on the expenses, and after a', 'July sixth, has not a shilling in the house.' Really, mistress, I've haen mair trouble about your taxes than any other body's in the district; and, I assure ye, it's nae joke coming out a' this length in sic warm weather." For this time Nelly got clear of her dun at the sacrifice of a bottle of strong ale. But at length the laws of the collectorate could be stretched no farther, and a poinding or execution took place in her house, with assurance, that if the taxes should not be settled before Tuesday next, her effects should be exposed to sale.

The intermediate time was spent by the poor widow and her daughter in unavailing grief; and, not having a single friend in the world to take her part, or rescue her from so dreadful a calamity, she could only look forward to destitution both for herself and the helpless creatures depending on her. The terrible day came round in course, when duly appeared a band of officials to execute the threat which hung over her. A red flag was displayed at the door, which speedily had the effect of collecting the villagers; and a barrel having been placed by the side of the threshold, the auctioneer mounted aloft, and began to sell the articles of furniture, which, one after another, were brought forth from the interior. Poor Nelly and her

daughter remained within, dissolved in grief, which the efforts of a few female neighbours, however well meant, could do little to control. The children moved about as usual ; and it was curious, amidst one of the most distressing scenes that can be witnessed, to hear their unconcerned prattle, which ever and anon was mingled with the coarse declamations of the auctioneer without, and the heart-bursting sorrow of the party within. Once, only once, could Nelly venture to peep abroad upon the proceedings out of doors ; she saw her cradle raised aloft for sale—the ancient and familiar cradle in which she had been herself rocked, which had nursed her own family, and was now or lately employed for her daughter's youngest child—and she shrunk back as if she had received a blow, and again buried her face in her lap by the fireside. In time, the dreadful scene was finished ; and she was left in her desolate cottage, with only one or two stools, and other little articles, which had been judged too trifling to be put up for sale. The coarse officials departed with the proceeds of their severity, leaving ruin and misery where there had formerly been humble content and cheerfulness.

For some time after this calamity, Nelly and her daughter took up their abode with a poor neighbour, and endeavoured to obtain a slender support by acting as washerwomen. They were also indebted, in some small measure, to the kindness of that daughter who has already been alluded to, as the only one whose lot proved in the least enviable. In the declining strength, however, of the old widow, and the duty of attending to so many children, which pressed upon her daughter Bell, all such means of support would have soon proved ineffectual, and the whole family would have speedily become objects of public charity, if it had not been for the providential re-appearance of Nelly's long-lost son James. This young man had at the first proved so unsuccessful in his object, that he could not prevail upon himself to write about his affairs to his mother. At length, however, he had become settled in an excellent

farm in the London district, in Upper Canada; and having heard of the unfortunate circumstances of his mother and sister, he had resolved to pay them a personal visit, and, if possible, prevail with them to accompany him to America. It would be vain to describe the joy with which Nelly hailed the appearance of her son, or the surprise she expressed at his improved circumstances. She very characteristically made no objection to undertaking so long a voyage at her advanced time of life, but only remarked, that "the bairns couldna steer a step till they got new sarks." All such difficulties, it may be imagined, were soon got over, and in a few weeks this persecuted little family found a safe retreat on the other side of the Atlantic. According to the last accounts, they were all living in a comfortable and happy manner, and Bell's family was beginning to be of no little service to their uncle. Nelly hardly liked the country at first, but soon became reconciled to it—one grand consideration moving her thereto, being (as she herself expressed it) that "there was nae fear *here* o' being roupit out for taxes!"

A SKELETON IN EVERY HOUSE.

WHEN suffering under the pressure of our own distresses, whether they be of regular continuance, or have come upon us of a sudden, we are apt to imagine that no individual in the surrounding world is so unfortunate as we, or, perhaps, that we stand altogether by ourselves in calamity, or, at the most, belong to a small body of unfortunates, forming an exception from all the rest of mankind. We look to a neighbour, and, seeing that he is not afflicted by any open or palpable grievance, and makes no complaint of any which are hidden from our eyes, we conclude that he is a man entirely fortunate and thoroughly happy, while we are never free from trouble of one kind or another, and, in fact,

appear as the very stepchildren of providence. For every particular evil which besets us, we find a contrast in the exactly opposite circumstances of some other person, and, by the pains of envy, perhaps, add materially to the real extent of our distresses. Are we condemned to a severe toil for our daily bread, then we look to him who gains it by some means which appear to us less laborious. Have we little of worldly wealth, then do we compare ourselves with the affluent man, who not only commands all those necessities of which we can barely obtain a sufficiency, but many luxuries besides, which we only know by name. Are we unblessed with the possession of children, we pine to see the superabundance which characterises another family, where they are far less earnestly desired. Are we bereft of a succession of tenderly beloved friends or relatives, we wonder at the felicity of certain persons under our observation, who never know what it is to wear mourning. In short, no evil falls to our lot but we are apt to think ourselves its almost sole victims, and we either overlook a great deal of the corresponding vexations of our fellow-creatures, or think, in our anguish, that they are far less than ours.

There is a story in Mr Roscoe's specimens of the Italian Novelists, which illustrates this fallacy in a very affecting manner. A widow of Naples, named the Countess Corsini, had but one son remaining to give her an interest in the world; and he was a youth so remarkable for the elegance of his person, and every graceful and amiable quality, that even if he had not stood in that situation of unusual tenderness towards his mother, she might well have been excused for beholding him with an extravagant degree of attachment. When this young gentleman grew up, he was sent to pursue his studies at the university of Bologna, where he so well improved his time, that he soon became one of the most distinguished scholars, at the same time that he gained the affection of all who knew him, on account of his singularly noble character and pleasing manners. Every

vacation, he returned to spend a few months with his mother, who never failed to mark with delight the progress he had made, if not in his literary studies, at least in the cultivation of every personal accomplishment. Her attachment was thus prevented from experiencing any abatement, and she was encouraged to place always more and more reliance upon that hope of his future greatness, which had induced her at first to send him to so distant a university, and had hitherto supported her under his absence. Who can describe the solicitude with which a mother—and “she a widow” (to use the language of Scripture)—regards a last-surviving son! His every motion—his every wish—she watches with attentive kindness. He cannot be absent a few minutes longer than his wont, but she becomes uneasy, and whatever be the company in which she sits at the moment, permits her whole soul to become abstracted in a reverie, from which nothing can rouse her but his return. If he comes on horseback, she hears the footfall of the animal, while it is as yet far beyond the ken of ordinary ears: if he be walking, she knows the sound of his foot upon the threshold, though confounded, to all other listeners, amidst the throng of his companions. Let him come into her room on ordinary occasions never so softly, she distinguishes him by his very breathing—his lightest respiration—and knows it is her son. Her entire being is bound up in his, and the sole gorgon thought at which she dare not look, is the idea of his following the goodly and pleasant company with whom she has already parted for the grave. Such exactly were the feelings of the Neapolitan mother respecting her noble and beloved—her *only* son.

It chanced, however, that, just when he was about to return to Naples, perfected in all the instruction which could be bestowed upon him, he was seized suddenly by a dangerous sickness, which, notwithstanding the efforts of the best physicians in Bologna, brought him in three days to the brink of the grave. Being assured that he could not survive, his only care, so far as concerned the living world,

was for his mother, who, he feared, would suffer severely from her loss, if not altogether sink under it. It was his most anxious wish that means should be used to prevent her being overpowered by grief; and an expedient for that purpose at length suggested itself to him. He wrote a letter to his mother, informing her of his illness, but not of its threatening character, and requesting that she would send him a shirt made by the happiest lady in all Naples, or she who appeared most free of the cares and sorrows of this world, for he had taken a fancy for such an article, and had a notion that by wearing it he would be speedily cured. The countess thought her son's request rather odd; but being loath to refuse any thing that would give him even a visionary satisfaction, she instantly set about her inquiry after the happiest lady in Naples, with the view of requesting her kind offices after the manner described. Her inquiry was tedious and difficult; every body she could think of, or who was pointed out to her, was found, on searching nearer, to have her own share of troubles. For some time she almost despaired; but having nevertheless persevered, she at length was introduced to one—a middle-aged married lady—who not only appeared to have all the imaginable materials of worldly bliss, but bore every external mark of being cheerful and contented in her situation. To this fortunate dame the countess preferred her request, making the circumstances of the case her only excuse for so strange an application. "My dear countess," said the lady, "spare all apology, for if I had really been qualified for the task, I would most gladly have undertaken it. But if you will just follow me to another room, I will prove to you that I am the most *miserable* woman in Naples." So saying, she led the mother to a remote chamber, where there was nothing but a curtain which hung from the ceiling to the floor. This being drawn aside, she disclosed, to the horror of her visitor, a skeleton hanging from a beam! "Oh, dreadful!" exclaimed the countess: "what means this?" The lady

looked mournfully at her, and, after a minute's silence, gave the following explanation. "This," she said, "was a youth who loved me before my marriage, and whom I was obliged to part with, when my relations obliged me to marry my present husband. We afterwards renewed our acquaintance, though with no evil intent, and my husband was so much infuriated at finding him one day in my presence, as to draw his sword and run him through the heart. Not satisfied with this, he caused him to be hung up here, and every night and morning since then, has compelled me to come and survey his remains. To the world I may bear a cheerful aspect, and seem to be possessed of all the comforts of life; but you may judge if I can be really entitled to the reputation which you have attributed to me, or be qualified to execute your son's commission."

The Countess Corsini readily acknowledged that her situation was most miserable, and retired to her own house, in despair of obtaining what she was in quest of, seeing that, if an apparently happy woman had such a secret sorrow as this, what were those likely to have who bore no such appearance. "Alas," she said to herself, "no one is exempt from the disasters and sorrows of life—*there is a skeleton in every house!*"

When she reached home, she found a letter conveying intelligence of her son's death, which in other circumstances would have overturned her reason, or broken her heart, but, prepared as she was by the foresight of her son, produced only a rational degree of grief. When the first acute sensations were past, she said resignedly to herself, that, great as the calamity was, it was probably no greater than what her fellow-creatures were enduring every day, and she would therefore submit with tranquillity.

The application of this tale, tinged as it is with the peculiar hue of continental manners and ideas, must be easy to every one of our readers. They must see how great a fallacy it is to suppose that others are, more generally than ourselves, spared any of the common mishaps of life, or

that *we*, in particular, are under the doom of a severe fate. They may be assured, that, beneath many of the most gorgeous shows of this world, there lurk terrible sores, which are not the less painful that they are unseen. The very happiest-looking men and women, the most prosperous mercantile concerns, have all their secret cankers and drawbacks. The pride of the noble—the luxury of the opulent—even the dignity and worship of the crown—all have a *something* to render them, if it were known, less enviable than they appear. We never, for our part, enter upon any glittering and magnificent scene, or hear of any person who is reputed to be singularly prosperous or happy, but we immediately think of the probability which exists, that our own humble home and condition, disposed as we sometimes may be to repine about them, comprise just as much of what is to be desired by a rational man as the other. Even in those great capitals, where affluence and luxury are so wonderfully concentrated, and all the higher orders appear so singularly well lodged and fed and attended to, we cannot help looking to the other side, and imagining for every one his own particular misery. The houses appear like palaces; but the idlest spectator may be assured of it, as one of the incontrovertible decrees of providence, *that there is a skeleton in every one of them.*

MAKERS AND SPENDERS.

FIRST ARTICLE.

It is apparent that an immense part of what is gained is not spent by those who gain it. Whether wages, salaries, stipends, or fees, the most of those who work for them enjoy but a small part themselves. All that a man gets in this world is a cup of tea and a roll in the morning, a slice of butcher-meat perhaps at dinner, and possibly another cup of tea, or some other slight affair, in the even-

ing. Now and then he gets a new coat. But this is all. The most of what he wins fills other mouths entirely. The money goes he hardly knows where. Some part, no doubt, feeds the creatures whom he has taken in bond from nature, and is obliged both by law and by his own feelings to support. But yet, making allowance for all that, and for taxes besides, which may be described as a drainage almost equally unavoidable—by far the most of what the most of people acquire by their own handiwork, is spent and enjoyed, not by themselves, but by others. You, ye sheep, says Virgil, grow wool not for yourselves ; you, ye bees, make honey not for yourselves ; you, ye oxen, draw ploughs not for yourselves. This is in a great measure the case with mankind too. A few of us are industrious to the excoriation of our fingers, and the dizzying of our heads ; but, by reason of our very application, we have neither time nor taste to spend the result : it goes to provide senseless luxuries to persons who are some way or other connected with us, and who, relying more upon our resources than we are ourselves disposed to do, permit themselves to have abundance of both time and taste. Who do you think keep up the deep-heeled boots, and the handsome clothes, and the cigars that are smoked on our fashionable streets ?—not, to be sure, the smockfaced fools who wear and whiff them. Who do you think support the fine fancy taverns, which, under the monkey names of cafes, and saloons, and divans, now ornament our cities ?—not, to be sure, the strutting coxcombs who frequent these places and think they are enjoying life. It almost all comes out of the pockets of industrious fathers, brothers, and other oppressed relations, who would be shocked at nothing so much as to be told that they supported such follies.

There might be some curious statistical inquiries in connection with this subject. In the first place, out of the whole population of the empire, how many work and support themselves, and how many are indolent and trust to

others ! Then, taking a few random instances of men who can gain more than they themselves require, it would be worth while to inquire how much, upon an average, and in proportion to their circumstances, such persons do for the slothful, the vicious, and the really unfortunate, who, like limpets on the back of some noble fish, stick to them for habitation and sustenance. Some, it would be found, besides maintaining the members of their own immediate household, voluntarily or involuntarily support nearly as many more. The fact is, every man and woman in the empire, who is in tolerably good circumstances, or who by any kind of chance has the administration of funds, is burdened with a greater or lesser number of dependents, some of whom, perhaps, really possess a claim through relationship, while a host of others have hardly the least purchase upon them, but, with the usual tenacity of the needy, would cling for ages by the slightest tendril of adherence. Whether one be in funds or not, if he only keeps a house at all, and has a door-bell to be rung,* he is apt to experience the same calamity. Such occasional expenditure of one's substance would hardly be grudged, if it were not that every existing family has some awful vampire, some unconscionable monster, who, while all the rest are steady and well-doing, finds it impossible to do any thing but incur large debts, engagements, and forfeits ; to liquidate which, and thus save him and themselves from shame, deprives industry, self-denial, and talent, of all their legitimate and hard-earned reward. If such monsters as these would be content to come in at meal-hours, and take their meat and drink, it would be all very well. The mere animal support of the wretches would be little felt. But they would take scorn to appear in this character at the table of either father, brother, or sister. Their pride and desire of showing off require that they should be put

* In Scotland, the most of houses have a door-bell only, which is used by all kinds and classes of visitors.

into some way of business, which, without of course exacting from them the least labour, or interfering in the least with their pleasures, may give them the management of considerable sums of money, and thus enable them to make an equal or even a better appearance than the very friends who have to supply the means. In a few years it is found that they have been playing at the game of keeping shops, at an expense to those relations of several hundred pounds a-year, or it may be more, above what would have been requisite for the mere bed and board of the insatiables; and all that the really meritorious have made in that time is squandered by the foolish. Nor is this the end of the monster. No: worse than worthless as his existence is, he must still be kept in life; and it is not always that his gawky pride and mindless wilfulness will permit the cheapest way to be taken for effecting this. After the first stings of injury have been forgot, that common affection to which he trusts, once more revives, and he is again provided with the means of entering into a visionary business, and showing off as he was wont. The same result, of course, ensues. In short, this monster hangs like a leech upon the family, till all that it has made from youth to age, and perhaps its original patrimony besides, is fairly drained and dribbled off through the channel of his base debaucheries. Such is not certainly the general extent of the evil; but that it is always more or less so, every family in the country, above the condition of labourers, and beneath that of the aristocracy, will attest. It seems as constant in nature that every household should have its one or more *black sheep*, as that every nest should contain a bird smaller and feebler than the rest.

The condition of a *downdraught* is not confined to persons of this order: there are *Father downdraughts* also. Strange as it may appear, nothing can be more certain—and every one on recollection will acknowledge it is so—than that there are many, very many instances of fathers of families, who hardly ever did any thing all their lives for

the maintenance of either wife or children. We once before remarked, that though only a limited portion of persons in one generation are the fathers of the next, the support of the said rising generation is one way and another pretty well allocated over society. This is certainly true ; but it generally happens that the wife and some of the children themselves are most immediately pressed with the burden. There are some men whose habits in their unmarried state might have assured any woman of their inability to win a woman's bread ; yet, whether this were obvious or not, such men never fail somehow or other to get married. It is then soon proved ; and almost from the marriage-day, the unfortunate woman—born perhaps to better prospects—perhaps hitherto unaccustomed to any kind of manual labour or exertion—is obliged to be herself the principal or sole bread-winner. Some men have the nature of Frenchmen in this respect : they think the woman well off in the mere honour of being married : they spend their own lives in amusement, or in idle sottishness, leaving to the wife every active duty, from the nursing of her children to the gaining of the family bread. We have known many a poor woman thus *trysted*, as the Scotch call it, and who declared that, if her husband would only be perfectly negative, and do neither harm nor good—if he would only not interfere with her humble business, or affront her before her customers—she would rejoice in her toils, and would not even grudge to afford him a decent sum every week, which he might spend as he pleased. It generally happens, however, that the maudlin monster cannot be thus purchased off. No bribe will satisfy his horrid appetite ; and if refused what she either has not to give, or cannot give without breaking her little commercial engagements, he will burst in upon her at times when she would rather see a basilisk, and, by the very *blackguardism* which he *knows* there is in his appearance, and calculates upon as the means of degrading her in the eyes of the world, attempt to frighten her into the required sacrifices. All her modest industry,

all her honourable endeavours to maintain a family which *he* should maintain, are often thus blasted, or at least greatly marred ; nor while health and strength are vouchsafed to her destroyer, may she entertain any immediate hope of being relieved from him. Could a commission of assassination be sued out against such a wretch, the most benevolent man on earth might be delighted to draw the trigger ; but unfortunately this is impossible. She must wait on and on, through years of toil and grief, till kind nature shall be pleased, of her own accord, to call off the bandog by whom she has been so long tormented, and at length permit her virtuous exertions to have their fair scope and their proper reward.

It often happens that the children have a large share in calamities of this kind. When the father becomes thus sunk in self-indulgence, thus lost to all self-respect, the exertions of the mother may perhaps hardly suffice. The consequence is, that their offspring are taken half instructed, or not instructed at all, and placed at any kind of employment by which they may earn a pittance. No matter that their prospects in life are thus narrowed, or their bodily and moral health exposed to destruction ; the momentary gratification of a selfish appetite would console a parent of this kind for any ill that could befall any of his fellow-creatures, however nearly connected with him. Many young people are, from this and other causes, burdened before their time with large encumbrances ; and although the duty is generally one of love, the hardship remains the same on the one side, and the injustice on the other. There is just one consolation as an offset to this calamity : it generally causes the new generation to be as careful and industrious as the preceding was the reverse. Horror-struck at the conduct of their fathers, the young people aim just the more at a contrary kind of life, and they generally thrive accordingly. Sometimes, after a victim has trod the streets for years in all the habiliments of woe, a strange revival suddenly takes place in his appearance. All at once he

gets a hat that *has* a crown, shoes that really possess soles, and possibly a new second-hand green surtout. The cause of this is, that the eldest son has just begun to make somewhat more than apprentices' wages. After their children have got a little forward in the world, Messieurs the Victims sometimes brush up amazingly. They begin to talk of "my son John," and almost seem to think themselves once more respectable members of society. John, however, continues to be terribly tried for all that, and many is the shilling he has to disburse for their occasional potations, over and above all his expenses for food and clothes, and all the charges he is under on account of their endless string of small children. In fact, sons are often held to the grindstone for the better part of life by fathers of this kind; and so much have they to do for *his* family, so effectually are they thus frightened at the very idea of such a thing, that it is ten to one against their ever finding themselves in heart to marry. They are forty before the tenth brother is out of petticoats, and after that they very rationally conclude that they have had enough to do with children, for one life at least.

SECOND ARTICLE.

Nothing can be more obvious than the revolutions which take place in the fortunes of families with almost every new generation. Our predecessors used to express this in a proverbial way, as follows :—

The grandsire buys; the father bigs :*

The son sells, and the grandson thigs.†

That is, fortune is acquired by one generation, used and enjoyed by a second, and squandered by a third, whose posterity become beggars. The general case is more exactly this : the child of a poor man works hard, and obtains wealth; the sons of this person, gifted with fortune of which they do not know the value, throw it to the

* Builds.

† This word expresses the condition of general mendicancy.

winds, and leave their children destitute: these children, however, knowing what poverty is, are careful, industrious, and successful, like their grandfather, and leave wealth to be again dissipated, as his was. The one generation, in short, gains what it does not spend; the other spends what it does not gain. Hardly any man has both the gaining and spending of his money—unless, indeed, he be one of those philosophers who judiciously contrive to be always, as the saying is, between the hand and the mouth, and thus defraud of all possible advantage, both contemporaries and posterity, superiors, inferiors, and equals.

All the real good that is done in the world is done by a limited number of persons. Some from their very childhood are marked out as individuals who will fully discharge every obligation of nature—work hard for their own bread, sustain those who have claims of affection upon them, and, after an useful and beneficial life, find themselves with a surplus for endowing their children. Others are destined from the very womb to be a trouble to all around them—to work hardly any, or to no good purpose; to bring children into the world whom others have to support; to be always, in fact, in the way of taking, and spoiling, and *sorning*, without ever making a single fellow-being the better of them—something like those children of charity described in works on the English poor-laws, who are ushered into existence by a midwife paid by the parish, nursed by a parish nurse, educated at a free school, apprenticed and supported all through by the parish, and finally buried at the expense of the same overlaid establishment. Just here and there in the waste of men, we see a goodly, honest, and painstaking person keeping up a decent house above his head, and paying scot and lot, as the saying is, with something perhaps to spare; while all around him hang numerous individuals, related and unrelated, who supply their own deficiencies from his store, and enjoy all the advantages of industry, or perhaps more, with nothing of its toils. If a man be tolerably poor, he is permitted to lead

a truly happy and independent life; but no sooner is it known of one that *he has any thing*, than whole legions of people come flocking about him to ravish away a share of it, and he is pestered out of his very life till they have got him once more equalised in every respect with themselves. A chicken which has just scraped up a rather larger worm than usual, is the aptest emblem in nature of a man so situated. Off she flies with the precious morsel hanging in her mouth. Off fly the rest of the brood after her, clamouring and pecking for a bit of it. In vain does she represent to them (for no doubt she does so) that the worm was the captive of her own bow and spear—that they may seek for another, and she won't interfere with them in eating it. No, no; nothing will do but a fair division of the spoil. Down at last goes the insect upon the ground, where it is immediately torn and gobbled in very unequal portions by her companions; and happy is she, if, in the longrun, she gets even a fair share of what unquestionably was altogether her own property.

So long as a man stands single in the world, or has none but infant children to attend to, he runs little risk of being altogether ruined by means not his own. The grand danger in the life of a respectable married member of society arises at the time when his children become men and women. We shall suppose a man who has been entirely the architect of his own fortune; a meritorious tradesman, who at first had to struggle with all the mishaps described in the preceding article—a victim father, a family not his own to be supported, and his capital for business all to be formed by his own labour. Suppose that this person, by singular perseverance, virtue, and ability, has overcome all his early troubles, and found himself at last able, without imprudence, to undertake the charge of a family of his own. In all probability, before his children grow up, he has been able to assume a style of life, which, though not ostentatious, comprises as much luxury and comfort as he may well be considered entitled to, after so laborious a life.

Whatever be his mode of living, it is supported entirely by his own gains ; and no one, therefore, can justly challenge it. It turns out, however, that the very ease in which this deserving man now lives, is apt to be exceedingly detrimental to his children. They have never known what want was. They calculate perhaps upon being set forward so well in the world, that very little exertion on their part may be necessary. It is at least apparent that the distressing circumstances which were a stimulus to their father in early life, are completely wanting to them ; and as the circumstances are contrary, so is the result apt to be. The father was urged by a desire of living as he now lives ; but the sons, who already live in this manner, have no such motive. It matters not that, so far as the young people are concerned, it is not a life that can last : the early usage is the thing which operates. In all entrances into life there are great initiatory difficulties ; if a boy become an apprentice to a trade, he has to encounter much drudgery at first, and perhaps many real hardships ; if he be destined for what is called a profession, the first steps are not in the least more easy. Now, the mischief lies in the disgust which a young person who has been brought up with all appliances and services, must feel on entering a course of life where the usage is so different and the labour so great. Lads who have mingled with genteel company, whether at their mother's tea-drinkings, or in scenes less innocent, cannot be seen going about as errand-boys, or doing any of those other acts of drudgery which are required on entering a business of the same order with that practised by their father. Such trades, therefore, are left to boys from the country, who have no acquaintances in whose eyes they may be degraded, or to the children of poorer persons than their own fathers. Now, it might be all very well that the young men are thus inclined, when the father is really possessed of fortune, and can give them the desired promotion in life. The cases, however, of which we speak, are those in which the father can only live respectably, and

has little or no command of spare money. In such a case, the affluence is just enough to do evil, without going far enough to do good. It would almost appear, that unless a man could feign poverty, and absolutely abstain from enjoying the fruits of his own industry, he can hardly save his children from this misfortune, or himself from the evils likely to arise from it.

It is not to be denied that many sons manifest superior application and talent in what has been shown by fathers of this kind, and, taking up the family prosperity at the point where their predecessors have dropped it, do not rest till they have carried it many degrees onward. Few instances, however, are found of prosperity in a *third* generation: Nature, which evidently never contemplated entails, seems to decree otherwise, in order that the good things of the world may not be monopolised by any peculiar race of men. At the hazard of being thought paradoxical, we would assign one generation as the more ordinary limit of prosperity, and lay it down as the most hopeful sign of any young man that his father was poor and his education hardy, while nothing, we would say, can look so ill for such an individual, as that he was brought up in perfect comfort, and had a patrimony to look forward to. We remember an honest country lad who used occasionally to cut the hair of his younger brothers, or of any other companion who chose, by submitting to him, to save the trifle generally given to the professed village barber. Some one once rallied this amateur tonsor on the inequalities which his scissors left behind them; to which he, with equal philosophy and good humour, replied, "Never mind—there's just a fortnight between a well-cut head and an ill one;" a remark which applies amazingly to the subject now in hand. The difference, evidently, between entering the world with and without capital, even where it is used in the former case with tolerable prudence, is purely a matter of time. A few years generally make them nearly alike.

How far good training may be effectual in averting the

calamity of an untoward family, we will not pretend to say. From the frequent instances, however, of the best of fathers having the worst of sons, we are disposed to fear that it has no sure effect. The female parent is often blameable for the indulgence with which she treats a wayward child, to the counteraction of better processes instituted by the father. Nothing will tire a mother's love for her sons; and it would almost appear that their very worthlessness, when such is their character, only endears them to her the more, by reason that it sets her to work in forming hopes of their amendment—hopes so brilliant, that they exceed greatly the sober estimation she may entertain for the actual ready-money goodness of the rest. But it is needless to inquire into causes: the fact is apparent, that innumerable children, with every thing that is vulgarly supposed an advantage to aid their entrance into life, either shy at the starting, or soon founder and go off the course; and that many a deserving man, after a long life of severe toil, and when expecting to enjoy thenceforward the sweets of competency and leisure, finds that he is beginning the world once more in a number of dispersed existences, each of which is freighted with a part of his gains, and a part of his honour, and a part of his whole heart and soul; all of which in many cases are shipwrecked and lost—so that the real dangers and disasters of life are only now commencing. Just in proportion to the number of his children, is the number of his hazards; and though he generally finds comfort in some, he is more fortunate than nine-tenths of his fellow-men, if there be not one, or perhaps two, or even more, who tear for years at his own vitals and those of their more industrious brethren, nor rest till either the one party or the other has hidden its ignominy in the grave.

It is difficult, no doubt, to argue against any principle that may be considered as identified with human nature. Yet speculative thinkers may justly question the propriety of all this toil and self-denial for the sake of our successors, when it is shown that, so far from doing them a certain

good, it is almost sure to do them harm. It will never be disputed that every man ought to put himself, if possible, into the condition of being able to give his children a fair chance in the world, among the average of his companions in the same rank of life. It is altogether questionable, however, if any thing more than this is either demanded by the laws of affection, or in any respect salutary or just. Abstractly, it is only ridiculous that one generation should in all cases, if possible, supply the enjoyments of another, and have none to itself. Why, then, may we not see the absurdity of the particular case, when it comes to be our own matter? Surely it were far better that men in general took more enjoyment out of their own gains than they do; leaving to their successors a fair proportion of the difficulties of entering into life, that they may be the more able to endure its eventual burdens, and be the more regaled when they come to taste the sweets of well-directed exertion.

THIRD ARTICLE.

There is a common remark, that, while some persons are blamed and punished for the least transgression, others, who seem as if they were favourites with society, may err as widely as they please, and the world will think of nothing but how it may most plausibly excuse them. This is in a great measure a false, as it unquestionably is a dangerous, supposition; but there are certainly some peculiarities of character of so valuable a kind, that individuals who bear them, are for their sake apt to be excused for many trivial offences.

There are some cases of insolvency where this is highly observable. The most of men who fall into this misfortune sink under a sense of mortification and disgrace, from which even conscious rectitude may not redeem them. Fearing they can never regain the respect and confidence of the world, they lose all respect for themselves, all confidence in their own energies, and, falling perhaps into bad

habits, soon become objects of pity to all their former acquaintances. There are, however, some cases of insolvency, where, even with less conscious rectitude, the individuals are in a great measure safe from this declension, being floated up by certain circumstances in their situation and general conduct, certain specious and external virtues, which, however unattended by real merit, the world is under some necessity of respecting.

Should the insolvent, for instance, be a decent family man—one who has long maintained what is considered a respectable place in society—who has sat at good men's feasts, and given good feasts himself—who has fulfilled all the regular duties which the world thinks requisite, and committed no glaring error or offence—in short, a good citizen and neighbour: in that case, so useful are such qualities, and so necessary is it to honour them, that he will be excused by the world for a delinquency, the tenth part of which would have brought execrations upon the head of another man, whose business habits were perhaps better, whose intentions were purer, and whose misfortunes were far less of his own procuring, but whose domestic reputation was not perhaps so good. In the one case, people recollect the exemplary appearance of the man in the midst of his family, and, regretting that a scene so decent and laudable should be broken up, do much perhaps for the restoration of his former circumstances: in the other, there is no such appeal to their moral feelings, and they permit the individual to go down the wind without even a desire that he should be restrained. In some cases the unfortunate individual has far more anchorages in the good-will and respect of the community than others. For instance, he may act as an elder or office-bearer in a place of worship, and thus be identified, in the eyes of many persons, with all that is venerable and good. In such a case—so great are the advantages which a bad man may take of a decent position—he may break and break and break, over and over again, seriously injuring hundreds of

his neighbours, and, in fact, living by a mere system of spoliation; and yet he will still be excused—still find friends to set him once more into credit. It is indeed a remarkable proof of the determination of the world at large, to encourage the external ordinances of virtue, that men who pay the proper respect to these, are thus safe from even the most deserved censure for occasional trespasses. And it should be a lesson of great force to all who are entering the world—showing that, without a regard for what society has agreed to consider the decencies of life, no man, let his other merits be what they may, has a fair chance in competition with his fellows. The philosophy of the question is simply this: the external decencies alluded to are above all things necessary; without them, nothing could be right—with them, there can only be partial wrong: hence, for the sake of encouraging them, a premium is held out, offering to those who will rigidly practise them, a lenient consideration for many venial errors that would otherwise be sharply rebuked. There is a great deal, moreover, in establishing a general reputation. The world has not time to try every offence by particular evidence: it refers such things in a great measure to general character. If that be good, few things are severely punished; if it be evil, the individual is in danger of having every movement, even the most innocent, interpreted into a crime. Indeed, without the habitual practice of religion and virtue, there is no respect, no advantage of any kind, *not even common safety*.

Of all the ways of spending what others gain, that which we have just indicated is perhaps the most promising to those who may be disposed to practise it. In most of the other modes, the spender depends in some measure upon the bounty of Pity—a passion which has never been found regularly liberal in its disbursements. *Here he depends upon the credulity and facility of commercial men, whom he has wheedled with his good general character, and the respectability of his domestic circumstances. Be it ob-*

served, men will sometimes give away scores of pounds on credit, while they would grudge the most trifling sum to an honest mendicant, who makes no profession of a design to return the money. One of these plausible men will thus sometimes continue, during a long course of life, to defraud the public every year of the sum which he requires for his household expenses, besides something infinitely greater to support his imprudences in business; and though a balance to a large amount is struck against society every third or fourth year, still, somehow or other, it is all excused to him—still he keeps up the same house—still he and his family retain their usual acquaintances, and his eldest daughter is spoken of as an agreeable woman; every thing goes on as usual; nothing will depress him into the victimhood which overtakes so many better men: they will not banish him or his black coat from the post of decency which they occupy every Sunday; whatever should happen, he must still be what he has ever been—he must still have about three hundred pounds a-year.

We have adverted to the idea of a black coat, and must here say a little more upon that particular branch of the subject. A black coat, to many of our readers, will appear a thing of no particular virtue, if the person wearing it be not otherwise entitled to respect. But this is a most mistaken notion. A black coat, upon whatever back it may appear, is a thing of immense importance and effect. It is the principal outward symbol and sign of respectability; and no sensible man, whatever be his circumstances, will ever be without so essential a necessary of life. Want a black coat, and, whatever be your prospects in the world, whatever your talent, knowledge, or virtue, you are viler than sea-weed; have one, and, even though you failed in business only yesterday, you are in a condition to command the obeisance of mankind. We speak with the more confidence on this subject, from having once known a ruined tradesman—a man destitute of all the extrinsic advantages already described—who kept him-

self afloat for about fifteen years by means of a black coat alone. How this man got his black coats, we cannot tell; but certain it is, that, come from what 'quarter they might, he always had one. His brother was also an oystercatcher like himself; but there lay between them this mighty difference, that the one always kept up a good black coat, while the other did not. It was curious to mark the various fortunes which resulted from these various circumstances. Thomas, who kept up the black coat, was able every now and then to push himself into some humble kind of business—to take a shop, to get one or two visionary barrels erected upon shelves, and obtain credit for perhaps a gallon or two of spirits, and a few dozens of strong ale. No matter that he sunk again before the next rent-day; it was always meat and drink to him in the meantime; and his obscurity at Fountainbridge did not prevent his rising again next month, by virtue of the eternal black coat, at the Abbey Hill. Thomas, in short, carried on a war of this kind for the length of time we have stated; and low as his expedients might be, he always had the appearance of a respectable man. Dick, on the other hand, who had not the same philosophical views respecting the efficacy of a black coat, sunk into utter wretchedness and want; or, if he had any resource at all, it was in the somewhat less extreme wretchedness of his brother. It might thus be said that both depended upon one coat: that single useful *investment*, though in the eye of the world exclusively belonging to Thomas, also served Dick. It did not serve him, indeed, as a garment: Tom had too much regard for it to trust it for a moment off his own back. But it served him indirectly as a means of getting those occasional morsels upon which he lived. Society, it must be confessed, proved at last too many for both of these gentlemen, and their black coat into the bargain—as it always does sooner or later with those who violate its great rule of honest labour; but still it was proved that one man could in a manner half live, and another exist to the extent of perhaps a still

larger fraction, for fifteen years, upon the garment we have alluded to. It was not that the coat was less powerful, but society more, that it at last failed in its grand end of enabling its proprietor and his dependent to use what they did not make.

In a family of the kind described at the beginning of this article—supposing it to have fully got into the habit of living upon the substance of others—it is curious to observe how characteristic is every circumstance connected with it. If either a son or a daughter marries, it is sure to be some person equally unsubstantial with themselves—some denizen of a similar house of misery and vain show—and accumulated wretchedness is the only result. All the outgoings and incomings of the family—every transaction of any of its members—its eating, its drinking, its dressing, its washing—betoken a shabby and unprincipled system, the result of long-continued dependence upon the labour of others. The acquaintances of the family gradually cease to be of a respectable stamp, and are at last found to be either young and inexperienced persons who have *something*, or individuals of a maturer age who have *nothing*. The falling of a person who has any thing into a society such as this—which sometimes does happen—is like the falling of a drop of water upon dry sand : his whole substance is almost immediately evaporated away, and he speedily becomes as arid and unproductive as themselves. Of course, no full-grown person who at once possesses sense and pence will trust himself for a moment in the company of such a fraternity. There are some persons, however, who have pence without sense, or at least are entrusted with the administration of pence by other people ; and these occasionally fall into the hands of the ungaining spenders, by whom they are generally made a glorious prey. The result is like that which attends the thrusting of a small dead animal into an ant's nest : if you come back in a day or two, you find it as clean a skeleton as if it had been bleached for centuries by the sun and wind.

FOURTH ARTICLE.

There is yet another class of spenders worthy of our attention. It is composed of those individuals, who, on an unforeseen reduction of their circumstances, prefer picking up a miserable subsistence by a dependence on friends and acquaintances, to earning the means of honest living, by engaging in employment below what they imagine to be the standard of gentility.

Undeserved reduction of circumstances is one of the most respectable of all things, and it will always gain respect in the local circle where it is known. Many misfortunes, however, which are called undeserved, are only called so by the sufferers themselves, through a principle of self-love blinding them to the real causes, or by persons who fear they may, deservedly or undeservedly, come to the same pass, and thus, in pleading for pity to others, only ask it by anticipation for themselves. Even where a reduction of circumstances takes place through guiltless misfortune, it is the first duty of the individuals to adapt themselves at once to their new position—to lay themselves out for the best employment, *however humble*, which they have a feasible chance of reaching, or of managing successfully—and to reduce their wants, whatever may be the immediate hardship, to the standard of that new employment. Those who, after their misfortunes, continue to live as well as ever, if they only can obtain the means through credit, are guilty of a great crime, the punishment of which will sooner or later overtake them; they will then find that the original misfortune was nothing to the new ones which their imprudence has permitted to follow. Notwithstanding, however, all the evils threatened to him who will not labour, there are many persons who do not seem accessible to a sense of what reduced circumstances demand of them. With a meanness beyond all expression, they will keep up the *appearance of their former rank* at the expense of all its *real dignity*—will borrow, beg, and incur undischARGE-

able debt in all directions, and thus lay themselves open to the contempt and execration of thousands of individuals, rather than, by taking up the next best course of honest industry, make an open confession of their decayed circumstances, which, after all, it is ten chances to one the world is already acquainted with. Families thus sometimes live for years, in what appears a genteel manner—that is to say, occupy a good house, and generally wear decent clothes—and yet are maintained chiefly by the charity of their own original acquaintances, or by debt incurred without the least prospect or intention of payment : educating their children, too, for learned professions ! which they can only accomplish by working upon the pity of all kinds of instructors ; a system of mendicancy only differing from the most common that is practised, in so far as it is carried on under the respectable appearance of a desire of knowledge and of advancement in the world. In reality, all bounties that we accept from persons upon whom we have no claim, are of a mean character ; for if it were established that the child of a poor person is entitled to gratuitous instruction, why not to any other of the advantages usually bought with money—and why are the honest and independent poor left without these advantages ? No, no : there is no right or certain principle in the world, but that every one must labour for himself in the way his faculties and capital best admit of, taking of course all the chances of the particular walk of life which he thus assumes. If he do not thus labour, and accommodate himself to his reduced circumstances, then he and his family—no matter how they are connected, no matter how fashionable they were, and would still wish to be—are a drag upon society, and liable to be ranked among the most contemptible classes of spenders.

We sincerely wish that we could, by these observations, give a new turn to the minds of those persons who are reduced by misfortunes, yet who will not accommodate themselves to their reduced circumstances. Abstractly,

there is nothing disgraceful in poverty. It may be, as it frequently has been, the lot of the most wealthy as well as the most dignified. And how noble is it for a man to combat such a misfortune !—how worthy of admiration is the spectacle of an honest and unfortunate individual bearing up under his griefs, and by his own manful exertions relieving himself from the difficulties which surround him !—how far superior, in the estimation of the right-thinking part of mankind, is such conduct to that of him who, coward-like, falls behind in the onward march of society, and suffers himself to be fed by the hand of charity, and trampled at last under foot ! It behoves every one, more especially every head of a family, to bear these things in remembrance. As soon as misfortune and poverty overtake him, and when every creditable effort he has made to restore himself to his original situation has failed, let him lose no time in endeavouring to gain a subsistence by an employment below the standard he has been accustomed to. If the exercise of his genius fail, what hinders him from resorting to his physical capacities for support ? It is no disparagement for the man who has all his days wielded a palette or a pen, to take up a pick-axe or a shovel : it is at least more respectable than to assume the tone and character of a “gentle beggar.” At the same time, he will take care that his family act a part becoming their altered circumstances. Those who were born to be served must now serve others, for in servitude there is nothing degrading to right principle, and the rags of decayed gentility will be well exchanged for the substantial garments congenial to a lowly situation.

It is astonishing how soon a family reduced in circumstances will triumph over their misfortunes, and regain something like their former footing, by pursuing the course we point out. The industry they exert, when governed by intelligence, will in general gain a superiority over that kind of stolid labour which is alike destitute of ambition and genius. Besides, a previous good name has advan-

tages which cannot be overlooked ; many will most likely strive to assist those who seem so willing to help themselves, while they would neglect, or hold in contempt, those who wanted both the heart and the hand for exertion.

Our heart glows with no small degree of pride when we reflect on the conduct of many individuals, particularly mothers of families in Scotland, who, on a reduction of their circumstances by the death of their husbands, or otherwise, submit with resignation to their humiliated condition, and enter upon occupations more suited to their necessities than either their birth or their feelings. The virtuous struggles which many poor widowed gentlewomen thus make to rear their families, and render them useful members of society, are an honour not only to themselves, but to human nature. They are assuredly entitled to a place in the honoured ranks of *Makers*, and may be permitted to look down with pity on the widely ramified, and frequently vicious, class of *Spenders*. And who will say that a blessing is withheld from the endeavours of all such meritorious individuals ? Their names do not perish off the earth, but are held in esteem by all who know them ; and their families, if endowed with the principles of integrity, self-denial, and industry, are almost sure of at length reaching that exalted station in society, which, without having been purified by their trials, they would in all likelihood never have attained.

DAVIE.

It is now nearly three years since the family of Mr Hope of Kelbank, in Perthshire, had occasion to pay a visit to the Continent. Of this family it is unnecessary to say more than that it consisted, while settled in Scotland, of Mr and Mrs Hope, with one son and two daughters, all grown up. On the present occasion, the son, Mr George,

was entrusted with the charge of the family, as the old gentleman was obliged by business to remain at home for a time, with the intention, however, of speedily joining the rest at Rome. Mr George was an elegant and dashing young man, had spent two fashionable winters in Edinburgh, and in particular had formed an intimate acquaintance with the Baron Damas, an official in the court of Charles X. at Holyroodhouse.

When Mrs Hope had determined upon the jaunt, she engaged a favourite female servant, by name Margaret, to accompany her abroad ; and till a few days before the time appointed for setting out, nothing occurred to mar this arrangement. It was found, however, almost at the last, that Margaret had a "lad," from whom she could on no account part : good wages and foreign sights were no doubt tempting, and a bargain was a thing not to be lightly broken. But what were all these to plighted love ? Margaret, in short, could not go. Mrs Hope found it impossible, in the very brief time which now remained, to engage another female servant. It occurred to her, however, as a last resource, that a certain clever little stable-boy, whom they had had for two or three years about the house, and who usually went by the familiar name of Davie, might be brushed up into a tolerably good footboy, provided he would consent to go. No sooner thought of than acted on. Davie was instantly called into the presence of his master and mistress, and asked if he had any objections to going abroad as a waiting-man, instead of remaining at home as only an attendant upon horses. The little fellow brightened at the very mention of such a thing. Objection !—Davie would go to the end of the world with his mistress, if his father and mother would only let him. Mr Hope dismissed the boy with commendations at once for his readiness, and his deference to the will of his parents, and immediately riding over the country to the place where Davie's friends resided, easily prevailed upon them to allow their son to go abroad.

Behold the family party, then, squired by Davie, setting out on their tour to the Continent.

In order that the remainder of our story should have its proper force, we must premise that Davie was essentially a Scotch village boy. He was one of those little Flibbertigibbets—to use one of Sir Walter's ideas—who are always to be seen flying about small towns in Scotland, with bare feet and fluttering attire, working all kinds of mischief against cats and poultry, fishing for eels, and tying their skins by way of trophy round their ankles, darkened by the sun to the tinge of a filbert, and unconscious of any evil on earth except the Shorter Catechism. Such only, however, was Davie, previous to his being reduced to servitude under Mr Hope. He had since then been put into proper externals—had learned to do a little in the way of serving a table—could whistle the hunting-song in *Der Freischutz*, and even already had manifested a tendency to that jockeyish coxcombry which consists in turning the row of knee-buttons towards the front. In former times, Davie's sun-bleached hair was arranged above the brow in a curious radiating fashion, which bears in Scotland an equally curious vaccine name; but now he had learned to train it neatly forwards, after a manner approved of by various persons of his own rank and station in life, and, upon the whole, he was a fair good-looking boy, though as yet in no respect superior in natural or acquired gifts to the humble duties which it was his lot to perform.

At the French ambassador's office in London, the family obtained a general passport, which expressed that they were going to Rome on business, and in which the redoubtable Davie was of course included as their servant. Nothing particular occurred till they arrived at a hotel in Paris, when, as they were about to sit down to take some refreshment, Miss Hope happened to cast a glance through the window, and saw a troop of *gens d'armes* ranked up in front of the house. "Surely," said she, "there must be some distinguished person in this hotel—see what a fine

guard of honour he has at the door !” At that moment two of the said gens d’armes entered the room, with a low bow ; and while one stood as erect as a poker, the other, who appeared to be the commanding-officer of the party, said very politely in French, “ Sir and ladies, I am sorry to be under the necessity of informing you that you must consider yourselves under arrest.”

The astonishment of our honest Scotch friends may be conceived at this unexpected and unaccountable turn of affairs. “ Under arrest !” exclaimed young Mr Hope ; “ for what ?” “ I beg your pardon, sir,” answered the Frenchman ; “ it is suspected by the French government that you have brought the Duc de Bourdeaux in your party from Holyroodhouse. I can but do my duty, by putting you all under arrest. I think, sir, you are not all here ; one of the individuals described in your passport seems to be wanting. *He* must be immediately had.”

The mystery all at once flashed upon the mind of the younger Miss Hope, who exclaimed, in a transport in which mirth struggled with wonder, “ George, I declare it’s Davie !” “ Davie !” said her brother, “ what of Davie ?”—for the idea was so far beyond all natural likelihood and feasibility, that he could not yet comprehend it. “ Why, Davie,” replied Miss Hope, “ Davie is supposed to be the Duc de Bourdeaux in disguise.” At this explanation, the whole party, excepting the Frenchmen, and Davie himself, who at that moment came in with a tray, burst into a fit of laughter, which hardly experienced any check even from the fear of a little temporary trouble. Davie taken for the Duc de Bourdeaux ! Davie a legitimate but disinherited sovereign ! Davie, who but yesterday was stable-boy at Kelbank, and is even at this very moment, all unconscious of his honours, engaged in the humble duty of marshalling vinegar and mustard cruets ! The idea was too ludicrous. It was more than the risible faculties of man could well bear ; and we verily believe, that though the party had seen the muskets of the national

guard levelled at them, they must still have laughed. After their merriment had passed the first burst, Mr Hope went up to the commandant, who was looking always graver and graver, and politely begged his pardon for what might appear to him as scarcely the conduct appropriate to the occasion. "I must really say, however, that the notion which the French government has formed as to our poor little waiting-boy, is so outré—so bizarre—that some little mirth is hardly avoidable."

"Pardonnez moi," said the Frenchman; "the description in the passport answers exactly to the Duc de Bourdeaux; it is known also to the French government that you, Monsieur Hope, was a visitor at Holyroodhouse. When these circumstances are taken in connection with the known intention of the ex-king to remove immediately from Scotland, it appears to me as if the probability were pretty strong."

"Well, sir," rejoined Mr Hope, "here is the boy himself; take a good look at him; examine him by question, or otherwise; show him to any person who may have seen the Duc de Bourdeaux before he left France; and if this be the illustrious personage you suspect him to be, I will be happy to submit to the consequences, however disagreeable."

Davie, who had stood for some time in a state of complete bewilderment, with a bread-knife arrested in his surprised hand, and his eye fixed alarmfully on his master (though his sensations referred rather to the gestures than the language), was now brought forward by Mr Hope, and subjected to the scrutiny of the soldiers, none of whom, however, were able to identify him.

"Comment s'appellez vous?" said the commandant, with an evident mixture of involuntary respect in what would have otherwise been the blunt question of a person in authority.

Davie only stared, for the very good reason that he did not understand the question. His master, however, hav-

ing explained to him that the gentleman wished to know his name, the supposed duke answered, in a strong Scotch accent, "Davie Fairbairn, if it please ye, sir."

"Ah, bien," said the Frenchman, in the same tone; "et qui sont vosres parens?"

This being likewise interpreted, Davie answered in all simplicity, "My father is the sutor at Collace, and my mother keeps the public."

When this was explained to the interrogator, he elevated his eyebrows with an incredulous expression, and asked if he had been long in the service of his present master.

"Ou, sir, I've been three year 'gin Martinmas wi' auld Mr Hope—I was the groom's right-hand man, sir; but now I'm promoted to wait on the leddies, and I'm gaun wi' them to Eetaly."

"Mon prince," said the commandant, with a mock obeisance, "vous avez employé bien votre temps en Ecosse. J'aperçois que vous avez appris à la perfection la langue." [My prince, you have employed your time well in Scotland—I perceive you have learned the language to perfection.]

The gravity of the family was here once more fairly overthrown, and they laughed long and loud, notwithstanding the evidently rising wrath of the two soldiers.

At length, mastering his mirth, Mr Hope proposed to go with the supposed pretender to the throne of France, otherwise called Davie Fairbairn, under a guard, to the residence of the intendant of police, where he conceived they would be sure to find some one qualified to decide the matter in question. To this the commandant consented, and they accordingly departed in a coach—Davie sitting as proud as a peacock in the back seat, between two of the soldiers, while a detachment was left to guard the ladies in the hotel. They were speedily introduced to the intendant—a very dignified looking person—who, having been informed of the case, set it at once to rest by declaring (what he had every reason to be sure of) that *Davie was not the duke.*

Mr Hope and his man were then liberated, with many polite expressions of regret, and conducted back to the hotel under every mark of respect. The former was advised, however, when he called next day at the British ambassador's, to get a separate passport for Davie for the rest of their journey, as the circumstances which had already marked him out for suspicion might operate elsewhere, and be productive of serious inconvenience to the family. Mr Hope obeyed this counsel, but it was found unnecessary. The story of the mistake at Paris had taken wind, and was known wherever they halted. Davie was accordingly treated all through France as a sort of lion—people seeming to feel a kind of interest in one who *might have turned out to be Henry V.*

FAVOURITISM IN FAMILIES.

PARENTAL affection, with all its amiableness, and its high utility, is liable to some unhappy weaknesses, which often lead to fatal and distressing results. When indulged to an extravagant degree, without being tempered by that judicious severity which is required to keep in check the wayward and imperfect understandings of children, it completely mars their education, or, to use a common and expressive phrase, *spoils* them. When indulged partially among the various members of a family, its effects are hardly less fatal, while its criminality is seldom attended with the same excuse.

The first of these faults is fortunately rare; otherwise the native wickedness of the human heart would not be nearly so much repressed in grown society as it is. But the more guilty, though less fatal weakness, of showing an undue favour to a part of a family, to the exclusion of the rest, is much more common, if indeed it may not be said to pervade, more or less, the bosom of every existing pa-

rent. It requires little effort to show that this is one of the most cruel and unreasonable of all vices—though, seated as it is amidst the unapproachable mysteries of the heart, there may be more difficulty in administering to it even a slight degree of correction. External individuals are generally surprised to find that the preference of the parents, where it exists, is not occasioned by any superior merit or more engaging appearance in its objects, but more frequently seems to arise from the very absence of those qualifications. There may, it is true, be cause for the preference, where its object or objects are less favoured by nature than the rest; nay, humanity demands, in such cases, that the affections of the parents should be called forth in larger measure, to compensate, as far as possible, for the deficiencies of nature. But the preference often exists where there is inferior temper and character, without any peculiarity of organisation to render it excusable. Love is expended where there is no love in return—where the disposition, on the contrary, is so harsh and cold, that Love, like the bird sent out by Noah, cannot find in it whereon to place his foot—while on the other hand, children of docile and affectionate character, who might amply repay the fondness and care of a parent, are neglected. There is something so irrational, as well as so unjust, in all this, that observers are lost in astonishment at the blindness which may accompany a passion, in general the most praiseworthy, and beautiful to look upon, of all which animate our nature.

There would be little use in thus adverting to a weakness so well known, and so generally reprehended where it occurs, if we had not some hope of awakening the consciences of many who have no chance of otherwise being informed of their error. We recollect a simple but touching anecdote, which we encountered many years ago in the course of our juvenile reading, and which may perhaps, by being revived here, still the souls of a few, to whom reasoning on such a subject might be useless. A lady of rank

had two sons, from six to eight years of age, named John and Frederick, the former of whom she doated on with an extravagant degree of fondness, while she carried her neglect and contempt to as great an extreme towards his brother. John she was in the habit of calling exclusively "My son," as if she had deemed him alone entitled to that endearing appellation. As for Frederick, though he was a child of the best dispositions, and every way worthy of her affection, she held him in such contempt and detestation, as sometimes to scream when he came into her presence, and desire "that odious thing" to be taken out of her sight. All this was the more strange, as John did not seem to regard her with any remarkable degree of affection, but, on the contrary, would sometimes repel her caresses, as more troublesome than agreeable to him, and, in general, rather shunned than sought her company. One day, when she was in bed very seriously indisposed, she heard the door opened, and a young foot enter the apartment. Having longed exceedingly all the morning to see her favourite child, who, instead of inquiring for her, had been amusing himself out of doors, she now supposed that this must be he, and accordingly exclaimed, in a voice of passionate tenderness and delight, "My son, is it you?" "No, mamma," was the timid answer returned to her inquiry, "it is only Frederick." The poor child had crept, with the longings of undeserved affection, to his mother's chamber, expecting to meet some one who could inform him how she was; and, now, terror-struck lest her disappointment at finding him where she expected his more beloved brother, would draw forth her anger, and perhaps increase her illness, he was, after giving the above reply, about to leave the room. The mother, however, was touched by the unconscious accusation contained in her child's words, and, springing from the bed, she clasped him in her arms with an ardour as extreme as her former coldness, assuring him, with tears of penitence and affection, that he too was her son, and never again

should be neglected. From that time forward she was never observed to manifest the least partiality for either of her children.

If this story be true—which it has all the appearance of being—it proves that the reason, when once effectually roused upon this subject, has the power of overcoming the passion which inspires parents with these erroneous attachments. We therefore call upon all parents, *at this very moment*, to take themselves to task, and if they be self-convicted of any undue preference of one child over another, let them exert their understandings to put down the unjust dictates of their feelings, and endeavour to equalise their affections over the whole of those who have a claim upon them. An injustice towards any individual in the little flock of which they have been made the keepers, is one of the most flagrant cruelties, and one of the most dangerous errors, that can be committed. It is the former, because no cruelty can be so shameful as that which is exercised upon a creature which neither provokes nor can resent it. It is the latter, because it is apt to derange all the best objects which we are enjoined to hold in view in the culture of youth, and thus occasion a serious damage to the general interest.

TOWN AND COUNTRY.

Town and country people think in a manner essentially different from each other. Their habits—their pursuits—the whole scenery and circumstances of their lives, are different; and hence arises the distinction between their sentiments. Though these two orders of beings are only fulfilling, each in their own way, a part of the general scheme of mutual utility; though the country is, as it were, the grazier, and the town the cook—the country the forester and the town the carpenter—the country the

grower and the town the seller—yet it is curious to see what odd jealousies and invidiousnesses prevail between them. Country people, visiting the town, are sometimes observed to be extravagantly resolute against the weakness of confessing any admiration of the grandeur and fashionable fopperies of the town—though it is quite certain that every ruralist on earth looks either to a Mantua or a Rome of his own, as the grand arbiter of fashion and instructor in manners. In Scotland, all the Lothians, Fife, and the border counties, regard Edinburgh as the fountain and centre of any thing *fine*: all Ayrshire, Lanarkshire, and thereabouts, looks to Glasgow. About Galloway, they have a prostrate admiration of Dumfries; and over the Tay, Aberdeen is the cynosure of all neighbouring eyes, except it be a few near Inverness. But yet, when the provincialist comes to his respective capital, watch him as you will, he will not say any thing admiring of it, unless perhaps there be an Englishman in company. They compare every thing disparagingly with the green hills and shining streams upon which they have been accustomed to look at home. Nay, the country folk will tell you that they perceive the air of the town as soon as they come within a mile or two of it, and are like to die of suffocation till they get out of it again. Every thing, they say, in the way of food, is inferior there, not being raised from the natural pith of the earth, but from wretched chemical forcings; the big buildings are only *big*; all the gentlemen are lawyers, that suck honest men's blood; and the more common-looking people are pickpockets. In fact, all the time that an honest countryman is in town, he is in a state of mingled scorn, terror, and distrust. He walks about the pavement (which hurts his feet dreadfully, because of its wanting the agreeable roughness and tenacity of a country road), glaring with an inapt, foreign, curious look at every window and sign, and evidently labouring under an idea that scores of people are hovering around him in all directions, to play him some mischief, if they can but catch

him off his guard. He complains terribly of the distance from one friend's residence to another, as if he were not accustomed to go three times the diameter of the town occasionally to see a neighbour. And whether he "stays" in a hotel, or "puts up" in a humble inn, it is all one—he is in a perfect agony to be gone. He only takes care first to buy a shawl for his wife, and a few mimic guns, fiddles, and picture-books, for his children—"for they always expect something," he affectionately remarks—and then back he flies to his rustic solitude.

It is curious, on the other hand, to remark the correspondently strange notions of a city-immured person respecting the country. Almost all know a little of it—but only a little. If they know little, they care less. It is only about the month of July, that, for the first time in the year, you begin to hear the city folk talk of the country. They then suddenly pluck up a kind of tender interest in the welfare of that neglected part of the world—something akin to the concern which one has about a woman about to add to the numbers of the human race. They begin to be anxious about the harvest, upon which they know (for they do know this much) a great deal of their own comfort for the next year depends. You then hear one person say to another, as they pause to shake hands on the street, "Capital weather this for the country! The wheat must be ripening very fast." Or else, if three people meet under some shelter to shun a shower, it is, "Very severe plump this—very good, though, for the country—shower much wanted." About this time, indeed, the town people become quite magnanimous in the cause of the country. If they only can convince themselves that a shower will do any good elsewhere, they will endure bucketfuls on their own persons with the greatest fortitude and patience. The agricultural interest is not at all aware of the real depth of concern which the commercial world takes in their business at this time—what kind inquiries are made after the prospects of the season—what fond wishes are breathed

for propitious weather—what anxiety is expressed about the progress of the harvest ! If any man has been a few miles out of town, and can tell something of the appearance of the fields, the hum at a dinner-party subsides in order to hear what he is saying to a gentleman across the table, respecting what he has seen out of doors. “A field of barley cut down, sir, last Wednesday, at Ceres, in Fife [most appropriate locality for such a wonder]—the first of the season—reaping expected to be very general next week. All owing to the fine weather in May. Farmers say they have not known a heavier crop since the ninety-six. New oats are expected at Dalkeith market on Thursday.” And then every man eats his dinner with a gratulatory relish, springing from the assurance that “things are all well in the country.” Even among humble artizans, who hardly ever see ten inches of blue sky, an interest of a most profound character is felt respecting the harvest ; and it is amazing how well they are acquainted with the technical provincial phrases appropriate to the subject. The measure and price of meal is to them a matter of the keenest and most immediate interest ; and they are political economists enough to know how intimately that matter is connected with the appearance of the fields in July. It is amusing, sometimes, about seven o'clock on a summer morning, to see perhaps a couple of old red-cowled men—shoemakers, perhaps, or small shopkeepers—taking a stroll with their hands in their pockets under their aprons, about three hundred yards out of town, where, amidst the villas of the suburbs, there may flourish a mere remnant of a field covered with growing barley ; they inspect this with a calculating air, and have their own unprofessional remarks on its appearance. And then they come back to town, and talk for a week about the crops. Or on a summer Sunday evening, when all the fashionable, and even what is called the respectable world, keeps haughtily within doors, how delightful it is to see the honest mechanic taking a stroll in some of the highways or byways a little way out

of town, along with his wife and perhaps one or two of his children ! His clothes are decent, though perhaps deficient in *expression*, and still marked with the creases incurred in their ordinary-day sinecurism. He probably carries his youngest child in his arms, while the wife sails on broad and large in a red shawl in front, attended by a few walking youngsters, who are ever and anon asking her questions about some rural object that strikes their eyes for the first time. It is about six o'clock ; and though the house is deserted and locked up, the kettle has been left very near the smothered fire, so as to be ready when they return for the infusion of the tea, which is destined to conclude the day's humble and well-earned enjoyments. As he moves along, with his arms clasped close round his little one, and the back of his coat swinging loose and free of his back, he prattles with his straggling family group about all the cows, and the horses, and the farm-yards, they come in sight of ; and ever and anon he takes an interested and knowing look at the oat fields, as if he saw in them the shadow of his coming pottage, and wondered what meal would cost next year per peck. If the weather be clear, with the sun shining over-head, then he rejoices, for two reasons—it is pleasant for a walk, and it promises to “do good to the country.” If a shower comes on, it discomposes him and his family not a little, and drives them, a little dragged perhaps, into the next public-house ; yet he suffers all with a good grace and a resigned heart—“it may perhaps be of service to the country.” If in passing along he sees a boy intruding upon a field of grain, for the purpose of plucking and bruising a few ears, he cries to him in an authoritative tone of voice, to come out of the victual ; this last phrase being the one which he is disposed to apply to grain, when he wants to treat it with more than usual respect. Whenever the group comes to a place where the enclosing fences are somewhat lofty, then has he to lift up his children one by one, that they may look over and see what they can see. The wife occasionally asks questions

about the neighbouring seats, and, in talking of these unusual matters, a style of speech steals unconsciously upon the worthy couple, which is considerably different in tone and language from what they use at home on the week-days. They feel somewhat like civil strangers, in a higher rank of life, explaining things to each other in an urbane and genteel kind of manner ; and it is not till they reach home, and recommence household realities, that they become exactly as familiar as they usually are with each other.

It is the most ridiculous thing in the world to institute invidious comparisons between the country and the town, or to say that the balance of advantage lies on either side. Cowper's celebrated line is a fallacy.* Much of both the country and the town is the creation of the Almighty, and much of both is the creation, in a certain sense, of man. The fields are rendered by man very different from what they were originally ; and though his handiwork is more observable in the city, still there is only a difference in degree. The institutions of social life prevail in both town and country ; and though there is perhaps more sophistication in the former, still that too is only a difference in degree. If we concede that social life was intended as the proper condition of man, we must allow that the clustering of certain of the race in cities must have been as expressly contemplated from the first, as the dispersion of others over the face of nature—for the existence of masses of population is a necessary consequence of social life. In this, as in every thing else, man has his choice. If he prefers the air and sights of the sweet-breathed country to the conventional conveniences of a city, he is right for himself and for his kind. If he prefers these conventional conveniences, at the expense of some of the said air and sights, then he is right too. For by either way the general good is advanced. In short, we would like to see all sorts of people removed above inconsiderate prejudices respecting

* "God made the country, but man made the town."

the lot and choice of their neighbours. Even to *wonder* how another man lives, wanting the things which you appreciate in your own destiny, shows an absence of proper reflection, and would be as well avoided. No man can know what happiness there is in the condition of his fellow men, unless he put himself into the same situation. Then he is apt to find, that, in the sphere and caste where he formerly thought there was nothing but unmingled misery, there exist many unseen comforts and blessings, which redeem its outward aspect.

SELF-APPRECIATION.

THE self-appreciation of all men is perhaps pretty much alike: the grand difference lies in the power of concealing it. In one point of view, he whom the world calls the vain man is only the most candid, while the person denominated modest is only so far a hypocrite. Nevertheless, as the intrusion of our self-appreciation before the eyes of others is to them disagreeable, it must be considered as a violation of the convenience of our fellow-creatures, which, like all similar annoyances, they are entitled to resent; and as it at the same time betrays a want of self-command, or of knowledge of the world, on the part of those manifesting it, mankind are equally justified in characterising it as either a defect in character or in conduct. Whatever, therefore, be the comparative simplicity of intentions in the vain man, his fault is one which it is for his advantage to combat, and, if possible, suppress.

When any man conceives that he possesses some peculiar mental qualification which should bring him to distinction in life, let him exert that property in every feasible way for the end he has in view. All kinds of *doings* are tolerated in such a person: he may write upon the loftiest theme in the world, or attempt a scientific project, which,

if successful, would revolutionise the general affairs of mankind. One thing, however, he *must not do* : he must never breathe a word to a living creature, that could be interpreted into a confession of his own sense of superiority. To put forward the slightest verbal or written pretension to a merit which either has or has not yet been conceded by the voice of his fellow-creatures, shipwrecks him at once, by stamping him as "a vain man." Nay, if he so much as receives a compliment in a way not perfectly modest—if he treats it in the least as a matter of course, or as a thing which he thought that he had reason to expect—if he do not, in fact, express a perpetual wonder at the honours that come upon him, and appear, all the time he is writing and fighting for praise, to be unconscious of there being any such thing in the world, he is equally sure to get this condemning reputation. The world will allow him to be as great a dissembler as he pleases, but it will not allow him to show the most distant symptom of self-esteem, an expressive enough proof of the leniency with which mankind often treat real vices, while simple weaknesses are punished without mercy.

It is a common remark, that modesty is always found in the same proportion as true greatness. And so it well may. When the literary society of Portsmouth came to pay their respects to Sir Walter Scott, then about to depart for Italy, and to make him an honorary member of their body, he expressed himself as oppressed with a compliment, to which "so humble an individual as he" had no pretension! Such, we have learned from one of the society, were nearly his exact words; and innumerable anecdotes of this eminent man could be adduced to the same effect. Now, with us the wonder would have been greater, if a man who received praise so abundantly and so readily had continued to appear externally covetous of it, or even in his heart received it with satisfaction. It was, in his case, water poured upon the drowned. The man from whom, in reality, modesty of this kind is least to be

expected, is he, who, getting little spontaneous praise from his fellow-men, finds himself under the necessity of giving them a gentle hint now and then as to his pretensions, and thus ravishing what he cannot get by fair means. Such a man has no acquired reputation to risk by his want of modesty, and thus he is deficient in one of the greatest checks. The backwardness of mankind makes him desperate, and seeing that he cannot be worse than he is, he hesitates not to tell them that he is at least no inconsiderable person in his own eyes. If such an individual, however, were suddenly to become really worthy of the admiration of his fellow-men, every step he advanced would be a pledge for his modesty, and he would at no time appear less aware of the existence of his laurels, than at the moment when they were blinding him with their luxuriance.

The strong and the feeble parts of human nature are so curiously mingled, that we sometimes find in one man the power to excel almost all others in a certain department of exertion, accompanied by an imbecility of character which causes him to seem even more vain and childish than the most unidea'd fop. All who have been much acquainted, for instance, with literary men, must have remarked, that, in some, the power of composing language seemed rather to arise from a disease in their minds, than from any superior organisation or innate genius. Vanity is an almost unfailing peculiarity in such persons; and if they do any good at all, to no other impulse or motive can it be traced. While these considerations call for our wonder, they should also make us humanely lenient towards the class of offenders whom we are pointing out to public notice. I may grant that the manifestation of self-esteem is an annoyance to others; yet I am inclined at the same time to suspect, that he who is most anxious for praise himself, is likely to be most fretted by seeing it thus self-applied in another. On no other principle does it appear to me explicable, that men visit this foible with so much reprobation and ridicule, while they will strain

every nerve, and scout every received moral maxim, in order to explain away the actual wickedness of some talented favourite, who perhaps despised them, and made them his tools. It is the part of a good spirit to regard this weakness with gentleness, as one which does no real harm to any one, while it is evidently a source of happiness to the individual in whom it is manifested. There are many points in human character more worthy of rebuke and more liable to reformation than this; and the pleasures of life are not so abundant as to enable us to spare even one so peculiarly founded on delusion.

PALLIATIONS.

"I could see through the soft appliances and easy palliations of some men."—KING CHARLES I.

PERHAPS no deliberate crime or error was ever yet committed by any man, without his having some excuse to make for it to himself, not only at the time, but for a long while after. The virtuous part of the public is very far wrong, if it supposes that the *other portion* acts in a mere spirit of recklessness, or in cool defiance of what it knows to be right. In reality, the wicked and the foolish conceive themselves to have just as good motives, and to be as much in the right *abstractly*, as the just and the wise. He who steals rather than work, convinces himself, in the first place, that no work is to be had; the robber upon a large scale always makes up for his assaults upon the rich, by being amazingly charitable to the poor. If any one commits a rash and cruel action, he persuades himself afterwards that he was in a passion at the time, and tries to nurse up his wrath, and keep it warm, that it may still appear to justify what he did. We are never, in short, deficient in excuses and palliatives for any offences except those committed by our neighbours; in considering these, we generally contrive to be remarkably candid.

In the lesser affairs of life, we have exactly the same apologetic system. "Bring me a glass of brandy," says one visitor of a coffeeroom, "*for I am very cold.*" "Bring me the same, with water," cries another, "*for I am very warm.*" Hardly any one has the honest hardihood of Foote, to call for the liquor "*because I like it.*" No, we will not confess even to ourselves the genuine vicious or self-indulgent motive which lurks at the bottom of our hearts: we are always so *very* polite and fair-spoken within the court of our own conscience. It is only when we see other people going wrong, that our disinterested indignation finds a vent; in such cases, silence would be a crime, forbearance a participation of the offence. We must launch forth, if it were only to show how very far we are from countenancing such doings, how impossible it is that we should ever commit them ourselves.

It is sometimes very amusing to observe how, when a man begins to wax a little wealthy, he also begins to convince himself of the necessity of certain luxuries. The habits and maxims of a straitened home still perhaps cling to him, and, even though certain that he can well afford what he desires, yet such is the effect of his customary state of feeling, that he has to make almost every new indulgence appear to himself in some measure as only an expedient in economy, or at least as absolutely unavoidable. Say that for some time past he has ceased to complain of the exorbitant rents demanded for houses, which used for years to be often in his mouth, and begun to let forth some hints as to the unproductiveness of property, the difficulty of getting good tenants, and the length of plasterers' and painters' bills, that he has even begun to take a curious and unwonted interest in a certain neglected portion of the newspapers, where estates are advertised for sale, and ascertained from his physician that application to business in the evenings is likely to tell soon upon his health—say that he has reached this point: how delightfully, some fine afternoon, does the vision of a neat curricule, calculated to

hold four besides the driver, come into his mind ! A cur-ricie, however, is an expensive thing. Moreover, it is a shockingly dashing thing, and does not at all suit with the sobriety of his character. Still more especially, it is a thing which would excite remark among his compeers. What would Gardner say ? what would Simpson think ? what would they all say at the club ? However, it is absolutely necessary for health ; that is perfectly clear. I think I might venture upon a horse, without being thought *very* extravagant. *Extravagant*, did I say ? Why, I believe I would gain by keeping a horse. In the first place, if it improved my health, which it is sure to do, what a saving in doctors' bills ! Then, I could only ride in the morning before breakfast ; to do so, I must go early to bed at night : that would save me going to the Bridgewater Arms, where, one night with another, I spend half as much as the daily keep of a horse. And then the opportunity of getting this cheap mare, which Johnson says he is tired of, and has no fault whatever ; only three-and-twenty guineas, which the hostler tells me I could get for her at any time I chose to part with her. A stable, too, offered at such a reasonable rent by Bennet, and so near our warehouse, that it may serve at the same time for putting lumber off our hands. As for a groom, our own porter, or even one of the apprentices, will be quite able to attend her. So, really, no one can say that I am in the least extravagant, more especially when my health would be so much improved by it. And, as my wife says, if I don't take good care of my health, where will all the family soon be ? I am therefore determined in future to take proper exercise, and preserve my health whatever be the consequences.

The horse, of course, is bought, and much about the same time it is thought *absolutely necessary* by the lady of the house, that the family should be removed to sea-bathing quarters. This "absolutely necessary" of Mrs Balderstone startles the gentleman a little at first ; for why should

it be absolutely necessary *now*, and not so before, when our circumstances were not so good? or why should it be absolutely necessary to *us*, while thousands of families struggle through existence without any such expedient being ever thought of. The objections of Mr Balderstone, however, seldom prove of much avail against the sage reasoning of his lady. "When you have the horse at any rate," says she, "it would be *so* convenient. You could ride to town every morning to attend business, and come home in the afternoon to dinner. And only think how moderate the rent of the lodgings is—only three guineas a month, including the use of that large garden. Why, we'll save it all in kitchen vegetables, or gooseberries for the children. And, besides, Willy is really in such a state that I cannot think of his being kept in town any longer; the doctor says ——" &c. Mr Balderstone of course gives in, for not only is he sensible that

"Nocht's to be won at woman's hand,
Unless ye gi'e her a' the plea"—

as the old song says—but he has himself a treacherous inclination towards the indulgence, on the conviction that his health (that is, his pleasure) "requires a taste of the country air in summer."

This does very well for one year; but if things have been continuing still further to prosper with the worthy couple, riding on horseback is found to be a solitary and somewhat dull kind of recreation, not to speak of the mud which you are occasionally compelled to bring home with you, and which is utterly destructive to clothes. Besides, you cannot well hold up an umbrella in riding, and the showers of rain, which it is now quite impossible to count upon not falling, have already almost brought back that bad cold you had in 1829. A doubt at the same time is also begun to be entertained by Mrs Balderstone, if there be any economy in renting a house in the country, even with the advantages of free vegetables and gooseberries.

Some day after these cogitations, or rather one morning at breakfast, Mr Balderstone, with his eyes bent on the advertising columns of a newspaper, and his hand supplying his mouth with spoonfuls of warm tea, thus suddenly opens his mind. "Why, the very thing I was thinking about. You know, my dear, I have for some time had an idea of buying a gig, being quite done up with that horrid riding: and here, I declare, is what will exactly answer the purpose: listen—'For sale, an excellent second-hand four-wheeled gig, with double seat, and set of harness in good condition: to be disposed of remarkably cheap, being the property of a gentleman about to leave the country: may be seen at Hobday's from eleven till three, Sundays excepted.' Off I set instantly. No, stop; I mustn't appear to be in a hurry: it would look as if I were too anxious. Let me see; ay, I'll step down about half-past one, and in the meantime I'll go round by the counting-house, and put a few pounds in my pocket. Well, this is really being lucky; you know I mentioned before there would be no additional expense in keeping a gig or a thing of this sort. The same horse will answer, the same premises, the shed in the back court will do for keeping all safe, just as well as a regular coach-house; the same person, that is, Samuel Hughes, the porter, will keep the whole in trim, I'll warrant him. Besides, I hear the tax is to be taken off gigs of all kinds; and what more need be said on the subject? In fact, it is all one as to expense, and I am sure there can be no comparison between an amusement which one enjoys by himself, and one in which one's wife and children can participate." "Oh, it will be so delightful," strikes in Mrs Balderstone, who has been listening all the time with pleasure depicted in her countenance. "Such an excellent plan! By all means, go down and buy the gig; it will be very cheap, I dare say. How nice it will be to have a drive occasionally along with *you*: the children, too, would be so much the better of it. And as to that neat cottage, my dear,"

continues she, "which you have been offered so low, you will surely just close with it, and we can all go down in May. I am quite tired of this place, where we are completely overlooked by Mrs Hodgson, the controller-general of the neighbourhood. And I am sure the interest of your money could be nothing to the expense of country lodgings, which you know is always very high;" a fact discovered by Mrs Balderstone since last year, but a very good fact for all that.

Having been already pretty well convinced of the advantage of this bargain, you lose little time in completing it—and then behold you with a country-box, and a curricule, all arising from an idea of saving tenpence of an evening at a club, and the "absolute necessity" that "Willy" should have the benefit of sea-bathing! After such wide and rapid stretches, it is easy to see that you cannot long endure the dust to which you are exposed in an open vehicle in summer, or the cold in winter, but must have a full-grown carriage at once; and that when once you have got a carriage, you must also have a somewhat larger house to match with it. In short, you very speedily find yourself living in a style of first-rate expense, though every step you made in advancing to it appeared to you at the time as either an attempt at greater frugality, or a matter of downright compulsion.

It would be all very well if these soft appliances were only brought to bear in such cases as the above. But the unfortunate truth is, that we use them most frequently for the extenuation of real guilt, or to bolster us up in some unhappy error of judgment. We would recommend a rigid self-examination in all the affairs that lie between ourselves and our consciences; and when any thing like an "easy palliation" can be detected, let it be denounced at once at the bar of our own judgment, and care taken to exclude it for the future. Good is only progressive: many persons may have been in the habit of presenting kind apologies to themselves for their own errors, without knowing

that they were doing any harm. It is to such that we particularly address this little essay; and if it should serve to put even a small part of the number upon their guard, its object will have been accomplished.

FALLACIES OF THE YOUNG.

JUSTICE AND GENEROSITY.

THE most mistaken ideas prevail among men in general, but especially the young, in respect of what is called generosity. Generosity, in its extreme sense, is the virtue of fools and knaves; while justice is the precious attribute of pure sense and real goodness. "Be just before you are generous," says the proverb; and proverbs, however offensive occasionally, never fail to embody what the experience of mankind has found to be most expedient. But this will not please the young man; he must hasten, almost before he has any thing of his own to give, to attain the reputation of being generous and liberal. Every claim whatsoever, that presses upon his attention, must be complied with, whether the property involved in his compliance be really his own, or only part of what has been entrusted into his hands by others. The ultimate necessity of showing that that gift was his own, or of supplying every deficiency which it may have occasioned, does not occur to him; and if it be either discovered to have been another's, or found to occasion a distress to himself or those to whom he is responsible, the effect is not traced to its cause: no, he is still allowed the character of generosity and friendliness, and even perhaps becomes the subject of a sympathising regret to the public, who say of him, with the falsest and most dangerous philosophy, "Alas, like all other good people, he is unfortunate."

Let all young men be impressed with the propriety—the necessity—and a stern necessity it is—of being just before

being generous. It would be easy for any body to make an outcry about this maxim, as if we were solicitous to repress every benevolent emotion in the young breast. But this would only be a hasty and wilful misinterpretation of our meaning. Far be it from us to counsel a regular and rigid shutting of the heart against every knock that comes to it from the finger of humanity. All that we wish is, that generosity on every occasion may be *governed* by justice—by the sense of what is legally required of us, and of other claims which are not only perhaps more imperative, though not so immediate, but are those for which we are much more truly responsible in a moral point of view. If, by the exercise of an extravagant generosity, we injure others who have depended upon our justice, we produce infinitely greater mischief than all that our generosity can prevent; for generosity seldom produces more than a temporary relief, while the injury of others tends to undermine and permanently destroy that basis of confidence which upholds society. If by one injudicious act of supposed kindness, we unfit ourselves for permanently acting a kind and useful part among those who are less happy than ourselves, we just take the readiest means to deprive ourselves of the habitual power of exercising that generosity in which we delight.

It ought to be recollected, especially by the young, that the funds which happen to be in our hands are seldom properly ours. In most instances we are merely stewards for the benefit of the true owners. And yet, how little is this attended to! Out of a spirit of ostentation—one of the most contemptible of our passions—we are apt to give away, among a list of splendid donations, that which should be appropriated to the just liquidation of our debts. If we thus blindly give away, or, by imprudent engagements, run the risk of having to give away, what is not our own, and acquire thereby the superficial reputation of generosity among the many, while the injured few suffer in secret, we commit two robberies at once—a positive and a negative—for

we both take from others their actual property, and we get ourselves invested with a kind of approbation not due to us, and which shows at the expense of those who are not so inconsiderately liberal.

There is another kind of generosity which we would condemn, for it has wrought incalculable mischief. This is the exercise of a spirit of public improvement or patronage, at the expense of others. How many lamentable instances could be brought forward of men having ruined themselves, their families, and their creditors, by acting in what is called a public-spirited way upon a large scale. It is generally assumed, that if these men had not possessed the liberality ascribed to them, certain matters of general importance would have never been carried into effect. Literature would have languished—or it would have been elsewhere; trade would not have been so prosperous; the arts could never have been encouraged in the way they have been; and a great number of men of genius would have been condemned to their native obscurity. This is all mere shortness of sight. Better, we say, that things were left to find their own way, or even to remain for ever at one point, than that any temporary impulse should be given to them, at the expense of a number of individuals; and the effect of which is almost sure to be lost as soon as that impulse is no longer followed up. What does it matter *where* trade lies—where men of genius are enabled to live—or where the arts are encouraged? If it only be *somewhere*, that is enough. We have known a harbour built by a private gentleman, at an expense of twelve thousand pounds, in a situation where ten thousand times that sum would never have generated a trade—and all from a mere local prepossession. In the same way, numerous instances occur of men who acquire a character of transcendent greatness, from overtrading upon the means of others, and doing those things which no other person, from prudence, would undertake. Such men, even after having ruined hundreds by unfulfilled engagements, and, perhaps,

engrossing the business of thousands by their extravagant liberality of dealing, will still receive a slavish veneration from mankind, as if they had been great public benefactors. Men do not see, that, so far as there was a natural and healthy scope for trade, others would have taken advantage of it, if the *liberal* gentleman had not done so; and, in all probability, by acting with more prudence, would have ultimately done much more general good.

The truth is, it is only the just man who can be properly liberal. It is only he who possesses, or has a chance of possessing, the means to be so, without injury to himself, to his creditors, and to the world. To us, the spectacle of a young and affectionate person who gives merely because it is asked, and never calculates the balance between the good of giving and the saved evil of withholding, is one of the most lamentable in the world, and liable to become one of the most pernicious. But what a different thing it is, to behold the man who first assures himself that he can satisfy every legal and moral claim, and then bestows, from his fulness, what he thinks will do others more good than himself, and what no one that depends upon him, by however different feelings inspired, has any title to grudge! Many give because they think it selfish to withhold. But in doing so, they in reality indulge themselves more selfishly than they would do by taking the most miserly care of their money. On the one side, in short, are *passion*, self-indulgence, heedlessness, and infinitely more chance of mischief than of good. On the other, are *principle*, abstemiousness in the luxury, as it has been too truly called, of doing good, the best chance of real ability to benefit our friends, true wisdom, and, what always consists exactly with wisdom, a right morality.

CLEVERNESS.

In the scene of human life presented to our observation, it appears obvious that there is a constant struggle going forward betwixt two great divisions of society—the aged and

the youthful. Each of these parties acts upon opposite principles. The old have found, by experience, that no good can be obtained, no permanent comfort secured, without the exercise of a great deal of cool judgment and prudence. They abound in recollections of innumerable instances in their past lives, in which they lost anticipated advantages by precipitancy, and gained them by a cautious and patient line of conduct. They remember that at every step in their career, they were impeded by the hurrying advance of others, or withheld by those who placed their sole enjoyment in gratifications by the way. In fine, they can describe that it was only by the due *control of the passions*, that they were enabled to succeed in their endeavours to attain a competence, or respectable independence.

The young, on the other hand, know almost nothing from experience. They start in the race of life with the most transcendant ideas of their own importance and abilities. Nobody that ever lived was half so clever as they are ; and all the rest of the rising generation are fools in comparison with them. They will soon show the world what can be done by their cleverness in business ; and they have no doubt but the whole town will very speedily be brought to admire their talent, and hasten to support them in their projects. And as for their foundering in their schemes, that is quite impossible : they will defy the cunningest sharper to cheat them ; and they know perfectly well the vicious temptations which they ought to shun. Just let them alone, and give them a fair field, and they will show what can be done. All mankind have been wrong from the beginning of the world, and it is they who will now put them right.

Such is the nature of those vague notions which more or less affect the conduct of most young men entering upon a scene of active exertion, in which they are left to pursue the courses they choose to follow. It may be remarked, that at no period of life are people more averse from advice, than when they are thus let loose from the restraints of boy-

hood. To the admonitions of guardians, friends, or fathers, they listen with apathy, and turn away without being convinced. To the anxiously proffered advice of an aged parent, they most likely reply, "Well, father, that is all very true you say; but the world is now greatly changed since your young days, and the same measures will no longer succeed. There are ways of doing things now-a-days that you have no proper idea of; and just give me a trial, and I will soon astonish you with my skill and management." Of course, the old man withdraws his fatherly cares from the ingenious youth—perhaps only thinking of him afterwards as in a certain sense lost, or only brought to a painful knowledge of his existence by the calls privately made upon him for pecuniary subsidies.

To whatever degree of loftiness the pretensions of the young man may have aspired, it is not long before he begins to suspect that the world is neither so silly nor so easily prevailed upon to second his views as he imagined. Presuming upon his innate knowledge of mankind, in all their various classes, he affects an excess of liberality in his dealings. He enters into acquaintanceship with any body, provided they have but a genteel look; implicitly gives credit when it is sought for; does not heed lending a few pounds when craved with a confidential air; and even becomes security for several of his dearest friends. It is generally seen that he also reckons with an amazing degree of confidence on the effects of his personal appearance. Every thing about him is to attract universal admiration: The elegant contour of his hair; his handsomely made coat; the peculiarly genteel colour of his gloves; the graceful droop in the chain of his watch, which hangs round his neck in the most approved fashion—are all, in his estimation, to be at once productive of envy among his competitors, and the cause of the deepest admiration and love among all the young ladies who have the happiness or misery to behold him. The wise and accomplished young man further prides himself on his speculations in business.

He tries to carry on trade by a sort of slight-of-hand, or by being up to every thing. Yet, somehow, he finds all will not do. His friends turn out unsubstantial visions : his elegant appearance fails entirely in gaining him either credit or respect : his means vanish in schemes which are proved to be unutterably ridiculous ; and he at length makes the notable discovery, that other people are just as wise and as clever as himself. Thus, every succeeding year of his life, the young man thinks less and less of his own abilities, or power of swaying the world to his wishes. He learns, by dreary experience, that, after all, dullness with prudence gets on much better than activity and heedlessness. Above all, he finds that there is no possibility of attaining any great and profitable end without accommodating himself to a thousand petty circumstances that occur—without ministering to the prejudices or prepossessions of others—without submitting, perhaps, to many supposed contumelies and neglects—without manfully breasting every succeeding wave of adversity that threatens to swallow him up.

So common is the fallacy of self-sufficient cleverness among the youthful, and the corresponding disregard of advice from the aged, that it would almost appear as if our race were, in this manner, by a provision of nature, doomed to be retarded in its advancement towards perfection. If each generation were to start with the full advantage of the experience of the one which preceded it, it is impossible to conceive the height of prosperity and happiness at which mankind would have already arrived. But it seems to be nearly as difficult to endow with the wisdom of three-score the youth of five and twenty, as it is to train the muscles of a child of six years old to the energy and endurance of a full-grown man. As the body acquires strength in a regular gradation, so the mind also attains improvement by degrees. Nevertheless, we do not despond over the case of those who naturally repel admonition from their predecessors. There is at least one form in which good

council presents itself without any circumstance which predisposes men to despise it, and that is, the writings which the industry and learning of ages have now largely accumulated, and which the art of printing is daily extending. It is from the reiterated efforts of the press that we are principally to look for melioration in the tempers and in the behaviour of the people. In proportion as the young indulge in judicious reading, they will learn to reflect soundly—to see the absurdity of closing their understandings against the deductions drawn from familiar examples of ruin produced by self-conceit and impassioned heedlessness. They will thus, to a certain degree, acquire that which will stand them in the stead of experience in life—a dependence on the experience of those who have gone before them. In the same measure, by being made extensively acquainted with the abilities of others—the cleverness of their predecessors as well as of their neighbours—they will profitably be led to think much less of their own acquirements, and to put considerably less value on their own capabilities of action.

Occasionally we see young men who are less headstrong at the outset than those we have pointed out. A few seem to step at once, as it were, into the sagacity of the aged, and it is always seen that they prosper in proportion as their conduct is regulated by the admonitions of prudence. The success of these entrants on the stage of human life is found to have depended principally on the due regulation of their passions—for in this mainly lies the secret of advancement in society. They engage in their occupations with coolness and deliberation, warily lying in wait for opportunities of well-doing, and taking advantage of those false steps which precipitate others from the eminence they have partially gained. While the greater proportion of the young and thoughtless are dropping aside out of the ranks, and disappearing, and the aged are naturally falling away from amongst them, they are steadily pursuing their way, shutting their eyes and their ears

against the various allurements that beset them—against the pretended friendships of the vicious or the simply contemptible—against, perhaps, the turbulence of their own appetites and passions—and so, by the time they have reached a mature manhood, they are already in the possession of those comforts and that honourable station that are the reward of virtue.

HOUSE-MONEY.

THE surprise with which Goldsmith's club learns that the reckoning is drunk out, will be fresh in the memory of almost all our readers. "Drunk out!" cried they all; "impossible!" The landlord they thought must be mistaken; or he must be cheating them; or there must have been a sudden rise in the price of liquors; or there must be some other mystery in the case, to account for so sudden an evanishment of all the sixpences originally deposited to defray the charges of their festivity. And yet the landlord was correct and honest; liquor was as it had been, and there was no mystery in the matter, but, simply, that people drink a great deal faster, when a few meet together, than they are apt to imagine. So it is with that wonderful thing called "house-money;" a thing that "mocks married men," if ever any thing mocked them; a thing of the most illusory and unascertainable character; a thing bottomless; an abyss. House-money, in the general acceptance of the word, is that sum which men in the middle ranks of life are accustomed to disburse weekly or monthly for the discharge of their household expenses during an ensuing space of time, and which is generally administered by the sage head and fair hands of the individual called the Lady of the House. A husband may have paid this sum for twenty or thirty years—for it must be paid—and yet the thing will be as great a mystery to him at the end as

at the beginning. It goes away from his hands, like the arrow of the Arabian prince, which was carried on and on by genii, and never was found again on earth : it passes from him, and he sees it no more : on Saturday he looked, and it was there, snug in the bottom of his pocket ; but on Monday, when he looked again, the place knew it not ; it had vanished for ever. What is the strangest thing of all, he never becomes in the least degree reconciled to the wonder. Instead of tamely sitting down, and saying to himself, " Well, I fairly give up the question of house-money ; it is a mystery beyond me, and I only misspend time in thinking of it," he is perpetually starting up, during the course of some half century of married life, with the vain inquiry, " But, my dear, where does all that money go ? ' Pon my honour, I don't understand how so much should be required to keep our small family. Are you satisfied yourself that all is quite right ; that there is no buttery-spirit secretly devouring our substance,* no strange error in your reckonings, no unheard-of overcharges in those passbooks that I see flying about like evil spirits ? I really wish you would see after it." Mrs Balderstone, who has had the same questions asked of her once every month for the last ten, twenty, thirty, or forty years, immediately takes fire at what she conceives to be an indirect charge against her housekeeping, and opens thus : " I really wonder, Mr Balderstone, that you will always be thus accusing me of extravagance. How often have I assured you that I am just as economical as I possibly can be ? In fact, it is wonderful how I can make the money go so far as I do ; and if it were not that I am so *excessively careful*, it would be quite impossible. You can have no idea of the number of things required for a house, and

* A superstition of our forefathers, which represented a gluttonous fiend as haunting larders, and fattening himself up, without, in general, being visible to mortal eyes. Sir Walter Scott somewhere tells a story of a buttery-spirit surprised at its morning meal in the pantry of an innkeeper.

how they mount up even in a weekly account. There's tea and sugar, butcher-meat and bread—tremendous articles! We consume no fewer than nine quarter loaves a-week. [Here Mr Balderstone raises his eye-brows in perfect astonishment.] And then there is beer and porter, and wines and spirits—all to be had, for you know you won't do without something of the kind every night. [Here the gentleman winces a little.] And coal—the single article of coal is dreadful." "Only in winter," interjects Mr Balderstone, glad to get a little flaw in his wife's argument. "Yes," resumes she; "but if I were not to lay by in summer, I never could stand the expense of this article in winter."

"Still," says Mr Balderstone, doggedly, "I cannot see how all these articles, even allowing the great quantity we use, and their high prices, should require such a *very* large sum as that which you get from me weekly, under the denomination of house-money."

"But do you think *these* are all? I wish they were. It is the *little things* that mount up—things that you have no idea of at all, but which, nevertheless, are as indispensable as any of the larger articles. If you only knew what a vast quantity of these we require, you would never call in question the way I lay out my money. There's soap, for instance, if that can be called a little article. We do not use less than two pounds every week of even the commonest kind. And there's pearl ashes—I lay out three-pence every fortnight on that article—even although we have to give out most of our washing; for you know you won't let me have that additional servant I have been so long wanting, and of course we can't get every thing of that kind done at home. [Another dreadful wince on the part of the gentleman.] And there's *such* a sum every week for vegetables—things I don't care for, but you know you won't want them, and of course they are to be got. And pepper, and vinegar, and pickles, and salt—a shilling a month for salt alone. In fact, it is quite endless, and my

hand is never out of my pocket from one week's end to the other. You can't think"——

"Yet still," interrupts Mr Balderstone (for there is no convincing him of a truth so abstract), "big things, and little things, and all kinds of things considered, still I wonder how so much money should be requisite. For my own part, I eat very temperately; my glass of punch at night is my only indulgence. You eat and drink still more sparingly. We keep very little company—only a *few friends* now and then. Our family, too, is small, and children do with very plain food, poor things!"

"Yes, yes," strikes in Mrs Balderstone in her turn, "all very true; but if you only knew how much these little creatures devour! They eat everlastingly, and a quartern loaf is nothing to them. There's little William—he takes five regular meals in the day, besides crusts in the intervals, and still you would think he is never satisfied. The dear pets have to grow off it: ah, you surely would not grudge your darlings their food [this, as the musicians say, *con espressione*]; and, now I think of it, what sums I have to pay every now and then for articles of clothing to them! To be sure, we run an account for the principal things. But, then, there is such a quantity of trifles besides, all of which I have to buy out of my money. Flannel shifts, stockings, tapes, thread for mending, and a *thousand* little things, that I never think of troubling you about. If I were to be strict, as I *ought* to be, I would have payment for all these items besides; but I am so anxious to be economical, that I have never yet said a word about it. This, it appears, is all the thanks I am to get. Really, Mr Balderstone, these suspicious inquiries of yours are very ungenerous."

The altercation now ceases. Mrs Balderstone's eloquent explanations have not left her husband a single leg to stand upon; yet he is only silent, from despair of making any thing of the discussion. He remains as wonderstruck as ever as to the nature and application of house-money;

and some three months after, when the recollection of the debate is a little worn out, up perks the eternal subject once more, and all the same explanations are elicited from the lady, rendering the darkness only deeper, and the mystery only a little more profound. Mr and Mrs Balderstone perhaps live together fifty-five years and eight months, when at length the gentleman dies at a very advanced age, full of all kinds of knowledge and information—perhaps highly distinguished for his proficiency in several branches of science—but with regard to house-money, quite as ignorant, and fretful, and suspicious, as he was in the first year of his connubial condition.

PEEPS FROM A WINDOW.

WHEN I was a student at the College of Edinburgh, I occupied an apartment in the southern division of the city, where many individuals in the same circumstances with myself, and many families in the lower walks of life, are accustomed to reside. My accommodations were humble, but they were suited to my fortune; and, with the world opening and brightening before me, I did not then much regard the want of those comforts which are afterwards found so necessary. Nor was the place without some real charms. From my window I commanded a view of one of the most august natural scenes any where to be met with—the rocky front of Salisbury Crags, at the bottom of which reposed a deserted palace, the seat of the most endeared historical recollections, and beside which I have often walked for hours with inexpressible pleasure, as if to be merely beneath the walls of Holyrood were the enjoyment of a romance. Then, on the fair spring evenings, when I could sit with my window open, it was delightful to hear the troops of little girls playing at their metrical games in some of the neighbouring courts, sent out by the

first burst of the fair weather, like so many ephemera, to enjoy a brief sport in what is always so precious a thing in the midst of a large city, the open air, and causing the lofty walls around them to resound with their sweet voices, as they lilted up "Janet Jo," or the *Merrymatanzie*, or "We are three brethren come from Spain," which last I have always deemed to be the final puerilised form of some antique *lai*, that once was sung in hall before the noble and the fair.*

* The reader, we make almost sure, will be pleased with the verses of this operatic game, which we will here write down from recollection. In the first place, one range of girls take their station at a wall, while another, twining their arms together behind their backs, commence moving backwards and forwards to the measure of the music, as they sing :

• We are three brethren come from Spain,
All in French garlands ;
We are come to court your daughter Jean,
And adieu to you, my darlings.

This is sung to a very pretty air in advancing, and, at the conclusion, the little row retreat at the same measured pace, while the wall-stationed party sing :

Our daughter Jean she is too young,
All in French garlands ;
She cannot bide your flattering tongue,
So adieu to you, my darlings.

The moveable party now again advance, singing :

Be she young, or be she old,
All in French garlands ;
It's for a bride she must be sold,
So adieu to you, my darlings.

The mother still refuses her consent—

A bride, a bride she shall not be,
All in French garlands,
Till she go through this world with me,
So adieu to you, my darlings.

There is here a hiatus or gap in our recollection ; but after the reply of the lovers, the maternal party relent in the following romantic terms :

In the course of one particular winter, I found a strange and hardly proper source of amusement for occasional leisure minutes, in inspecting the proceedings of a family, whose windows, owing to an angularity in two streets, approached near to mine, and whose rooms I could survey from my own somewhat elevated situation, without their being able to see mine, or likely to observe what I was about. Had the case been an ordinary one, I do not think I would have spent a minute on such a business as this; but there was something in the family which, little as I saw of it, very speedily interested me. The man seemed merely a common artizan—I should not wonder that he belonged to that trade which mankind have so foolishly agreed to laugh at, the tailors; or perhaps he was a shoemaker. No matter. It was evident, from the hours he

Come back, come back, you courteous knight,
 All in French garlands;
 Clear up your spurs, and make them bright,
 And adieu to you, my darlings.

We are again at a loss for what the lover says; but the stationary row proceed to offer a choice of their daughters, in the following elegant terms:

Smell my lilies, smell my roses,
 All in French garlands;
 Which of my maidens do ye chose?
 And adieu to you, my darlings.

The lover now becomes fastidious in proportion to the concessions of the opposite party, and affects to scruple about the bodily sanity of the young ladies:

Are all your daughters safe and sound?
 All in French garlands,
 Are all your daughters safe and sound?
 And adieu to you, my darlings.

But it would appear he is quite assured by the answer, and marries the daughter Jean accordingly—who has

In every pocket a thousand pound,
 All in French garlands;
 On every finger a gay gold ring,
 And adieu to you, my darlings.

kept, that he was a man who won weekly wages at some ordinary employment. His wife was a neat, decent-looking woman, apparently from the country; and they had one lovely infant, which even the confined air of the city had not deprived of its radiant cheeks and sunny smiles. It was delightful to observe the honest artizan, whenever he came home, immediately get hold of his darling child, and coax and prattle with it on his knee. His habits seemed all to be of a laudable and even interesting description. It was evident he spent none of his leisure time anywhere but in the society—and what more fitting?—of his wife and infant. On the outside of his windows, which had a pretty clear exposure to the south, he had boxes containing a small mimic garden, and he was frequently engaged in dressing these little spots and training the flowers, as if, in so doing, he found there was still a link between himself and physical nature. He had also a black-bird, which hung in a cage on the outside, and in the evenings made all the neighbourhood vocal with “Over the water to Charlie.” These things were but trivial fragments of the country, its scenes and sounds; but they were all, I doubt not, that could be had in the present state of his circumstances; and to a mind of any reach of idea, they would always be sufficient to awaken associations of the more extensive ranges of natural objects, to which he had been perhaps accustomed in other years, and which he looked back to with the ceaseless regret of a city-banished lover of nature. He had also a German flute, which on some evenings he would play at an open window; and I am free to confess that I have rarely since been so truly touched by any music. His favourite tunes were the simple pastoral melodies of Scotland—Tweedside, Cowdenknowes, the Bush aboon Traquair, and so forth—all of which had no less the charm of association to me than they could have to the performer, for I too was an exile from the scenes which those airs so effectually consecrate in the hearts of all connected with them. What was

not the least pleasing trait of this evidently amiable and well-principled man, was, that, at a certain hour, he invariably opened a large Bible on his table, and appeared to give himself and his household up for a time to religious meditation.* There was altogether in this man exactly that range of tastes and habits which so frequently adorn humble life in the rural districts of Scotland, but which are unfortunately found so much more rarely amidst the huge masses of a city population.* I was so pleased

* Private worship was formerly an almost universal practice in Scotland, in cities as well as in the country. In the former it is now hardly known, while in the rural districts, where national habits of all kinds, good and bad, are sure to be longest retained, it is rapidly going out of fashion. Every body will recollect the beautiful description of the ceremony in Burns's *Cottar's Saturday Night*; yet, beautiful as that description is, I question if it possesses a charm superior to a little anecdote, which has been related to me by a lady, respecting the performance of this domestic solemnity in one of the meanest suburbs of this large city. In this lady's younger days, her family used to pay some attentions to a very old and very poor couple, who lived in a back court at Fountain-bridge, and whose means of subsistence were of the humblest and most precarious kind. They kept two or three hens, whose eggs, sold in the market, procured for them the only money they ever at any time saw. Then Janet could occasionally make herself useful among her poor neighbours, and from them, as well as from some persons in better condition, with whom she kept up an acquaintance, would occasionally procure small supplies of victuals. For many years towards the close of her life, this poor woman was quite blind; nevertheless, it was curious to see her still continuing to patch her husband's clothes—which, on inquiry, she said she did "by rule o' thoom"—and also to perform little servile offices for the gaining of a livelihood. Every night, old John performed what he called *family worship*, raising, with his thin tremulous voice, a psalm, which even the addition of Janet's shrill treble could hardly render audible in the back court into which their windows looked. The most touching thing of all was, that, after Janet's death, John still kept up his custom; and, according to our informant, hardly any thing could have been more interesting than to listen for a moment in

with the man—his modest frugal household, his fondness for his child, his music, his gardening, and his sobriety—that, from an idle and impertinent gazer, I became mentally his zealous friend, and there was nothing in my power I would not have done to testify that friendship.

A deep gloom at length came over my happy picture. My worthy friend, I saw, had become ill. His infant was no more dandled on his knee at the window. His flute was no more heard in the court. The blackbird was taken in, and silenced in some manner. His windows were deeply screened, and I could see no more. For a considerable time this continued, till, getting somewhat anxious, I requested my landlady, decent Mrs Nichol, to make some inquiries among the neighbours respecting my unknown friend. I learned that he had been seized by a lingering and dangerous distemper, which prevented him from working any, and was likely to be attended with great embarrassment in more ways than one. Mrs Nichol amply confirmed the good impression I had taken of the man. He was an active and sober tradesman, and a perfect example in the neighbourhood, though no one could be farther than he from all interference with those around him. By and bye he became a little better, as it was thought, and began to appear, in the habiliments of a sick chamber, at the window, where I saw him smiling upon the infant which smiled upon his knee, but evidently unable to give it the customary sport. Sometimes he would have the Bible open on the table, and his wife sitting fondly and reverently at his feet; a group to my feelings the most lovely, the most tender and melancholy—melancholy yet pleasing—that I thought I had ever seen. It was truly astonishing what a poor man could be—how amiable and noble a being!—how near, I might almost say, to the angelic! The

passing to the solitary devotions of this widowed, helpless, and abject creature, whose thready notes seemed the last expiring sighs of attenuated humanity.

grosser elements of life seemed here refined away ; and this humble and distressed tradesman shone out in my eyes as something far above even the more elevated classes of his fellow-mortals.

The end of the college session soon after arrived, when I had to return to my native home at a considerable distance in —shire. I could not leave my lodgings without a feeling of deep anxiety respecting this excellent family, for the life of the sick man was declared to be in great danger ; and ere long, I reflected, the virtues of this humble scene may be swept from their place, and be heard of no more. The interest I took in the sick man and his concerns would have been declared by many persons to be a mere freak of fancy ; but I would fain hope that it was only the impression which *goodness* is naturally calculated to make upon a heart of the medium correctness of feeling, when truly studied and observed.

During the ensuing summer, though deeply engaged with my books, and diverted by other objects and amusements, I cast many a thought of kindness back to the amiable household in Edinburgh, but had no opportunity of learning the fate of its master. It was therefore with a burst of joyful feeling, such as has attended few events in my life, that, in returning in November to my wonted lodgings, and hurrying to take a survey of my tradesman's windows, I saw him sitting, as after dinner, dandling his child with the same glee as before his illness, while his wife was bustling gaily about her domestic duties, and the blackbird at the window was whistling "Over the water to Charlie" as vociferously as ever.

SMALL AFFAIRS.

WE learn, by common experience and observation, that life does not consist of a repetition of great or apparently important actions, but of duties generally of the most trifling nature. The young, in entering upon a scene of active exertion, miscalculate seriously when they suppose that they will be called upon to distinguish themselves by some glorious deed, or to gain celebrity by a series of great and difficult actions, before they receive the approbation of their fellows, and come into the enjoyment of an honourable and luxurious repose. There are comparatively few whose fate leads them into enterprises of such a description. By far the greater proportion of persons move in a sphere of life in which they are called on to perform the simplest and the easiest duties. Life consists of a round of minute trifling actions, unworthy of notice in a biography, and in general no way interesting even to the actors themselves. A man rises in the morning and dresses himself; he breakfasts, dines, and perhaps sups; he then sleeps, and in due time rises again, and again goes through the same dull routine. As for his fore and afternoons, he fills them up by attending to his business, whatever it is; and in the intervals of leisure recreates himself in the bosom of his family. And so his life is spent, from, probably, his thirtieth year, till the close of his existence.

But although most men thus pass away their time, and are rarely obliged to put forth any very extraordinary effort either for subsistence or applause, they are necessitated to pay a pretty close attention to that on which they are ordinarily employed. In this consists one of the great secrets of worldly success. Once in twenty years, or so, we hear of an individual who is crowned with honour and loaded with wealth, by making a dash—by some bold enterprise, carried to a fortunate conclusion. But these are exceptions—they afford no rule for general guidance. On mak-

ing our choice of a profession—and it does not seem of the last consequence what the profession is—or in engaging in any piece of business whatsoever, the trick of success, as we have just said, lies in pursuing it with such a scrupulous attention to trifling details, that hardly any thing is suffered to escape notice.

While we believe few men will exactly contest the propriety of attending to the trifling duties of life, most men will differ as to the exact degree to which the attention should be ultimately carried. Every one stops short at a stage regulated by his personal feelings or convenience. Now, we can safely say, from all that has ever come under our own observation, that far more—ay, a thousand times more—err, from paying too little than too much attention in this respect. Many imagine that they are sufficiently attentive to their interests, if they only heed the great things, and let the little alone, which they believe will take care of themselves. They think and think about some grand speculations they will by and by enter into, or what astonishing feats they will perform next spring, or what efforts they will make when some particular law is abrogated, to allow them to carry on some particular branch of trade; and so they spend an immense deal of time in theorising, while in the interval they are forgetting the main chance; that is, they are giving up attention to their present occupation, which is falling into decay for lack of supervision.

Oh! I cannot be troubled doing this or that—or going to such a place—or what signifies it that I am not at my place of business for an hour—an hour is neither here nor there—those I have employed can do all that is wanted—it would be a hard case, indeed, if I were to be a drudge all my days. With this species of fond indulgence, men treat fortune as if it were to be always at their beck—as if the world would stand still till they found it convenient to move forward. It is a fallacy of many young, and of some middle-aged persons, to suppose that protracted evening

amusements are allowable, seeing that they do not interfere with business hours. If they really did not encroach on the time allotted to exertion, there might be little to say on the contrary. But that they do so, must be obvious to all except those whose self-indulgence has exposed them to the delusion. No man who squanders his spirit and energies in nightly debauch can possibly re-address himself to the business of the world next day with the same power as if he had retired to rest at the proper hour, after a moderate recreation. If he takes his usual quantity of sleep, he is belated; if not, he comes to his labours with but a part of himself. Nor is this all: systematic indulgences of this kind cannot be carried on without arrangements, and saunterings, and meetings with boon companions during the day, all of which divert the attention of an individual from that which most truly concerns him. And what is the result of a habitual practice of this kind?—a dislike of all steady employment, a failure of the powers of application, an impaired constitution, deranged circumstances, ruin, and death. A prudent man knows that a proper spending of the time of relaxation is as necessary to success as is the proper spending of the hours of business.

Innumerable instances are at present in our recollection, of young men in business losing great advantages by taking small things too easily. Although possessed of a considerable amount of capital, good connections, good education, and good abilities, they allowed the possibilities of success in great things to engross so much of their notice, that they were heedless of the minutiae of ordinary affairs, as well as of the value of their hours of relaxation, and therefore lost themselves in a maze of difficulties. The time they were planning their wonderful projects, and amusing themselves, and leaving their trifling duties to be performed by dependents, others were improving their condition by the closest and most effectual exertions, by seeing almost every detail executed under their immediate inspection, so that in the end they outstripped those who com-

enced under much more advantageous circumstances, and had at first far higher promises of well-doing.

One of the silly reasons which young men sometimes give for not being more extensively acquainted with the details of not only their own profession, but the general business of life, is, that it would be *low* to stoop to make themselves masters of such minutiae. This dread of doing what is thought to be *low* is a sad barrier in the way to wealth and respectability. The lives of most men who have distinguished themselves either in military or civil professions, abound in instructive examples of what may be accomplished by attention to the lesser details of any species of occupation; and we frequently find, that the greater the celebrity to which a man has attained, the closer has been his observation of the minor duties of his profession. It is told that Bonaparte considered no detail too *low* for his inspection, and nothing too trifling to be unworthy of notice. The Duke of Wellington acted upon the same principle in his campaigns: one day, enquiring of an officer about some minute details regarding the equipage of the troops, the officer replied, "that he did not consider the knowledge of such things within his province." "Not within your province!" exclaimed the duke; "why, sir, I know the number of nails in every soldier's shoe."*

The amount of valuable information, on all kinds of subjects, with which many individuals have it in their power to store their minds, and which by incidental circumstances may be brought to bear on some useful object, merely by attending to things apparently trifling—by considering no source of information too low, provided it be an honourable one, is altogether astonishing. The time that most people are consuming in indolence, or with a disregard of the minutiae of general occupation, others,

* This anecdote is given by Dr Wardrop, of London, in his excellent Lectures on Surgery.

who are aware of the value of knowledge, are assiduously picking it up wherever it is to be found, and carefully applying it wherever it is discovered to be useful. By this means a man becomes impregnable at all points ; he is able to say something on all subjects ; he obtains the reputation of a man of intelligence ; and his force of character, as well as his known application, lead him to offices of distinction and respectable opulence.

BEGINNINGS.

THE number of people who have the ambition of attempting literary composition is one of the remarkable features of this age. There is hardly a well-educated person who has not, some night or other in the course of his life, after reading a captivating article in his favourite periodical, sat down with paper, pens, and ink before him, resolved to write something in the same manner, upon a subject which, to use his own phrase, has long been in his head. In general, however, the result of these attempts is only a heap of blotted and interlineated scraps, upon which, if you could gather them up and piece them together, you would find from thirty to forty initiatory sentences, and not so much as an attempt at a second one. The difficulty with these inexperienced gentlemen is how to begin—how to get language of sufficient emphasis to excite attention at first, and to be worthy of the mighty subject that is to follow. Accordingly, after spending a whole evening and half a quire of paper, and cutting down seven good quills in pure agony of spirit, they rise from their unfinished, uncommenced task, wondering what magic there can be in literary labour, and resolved to remain members of the *reading* public all the rest of their days.

The writer of the present little essay, at an early period of life, experienced all this difficulty in commencing his com-

positions; and if he had not been endowed with a rather uncommon share of perseverance, he would never have to this day written a *second sentence*. After toiling a long time in vain, I discovered [the reader must allow him to use the first person] a plan for obviating the difficulty, which, though I do not now practise it, was of service to me at the time, and may be so to others also. I adopted the project of making my opening clauses first—to strike the key-note, as it were—and then proceeding with my composition, just as reason should direct or fancy dictate. There was more rationality in this than some people may suppose. We are all more or less creatures of impulse; and it depends very much upon the way we begin any thing—the spending of the day, for instance—how we are to follow it out. My opening clauses were generally recollected from some book of essays formerly read; and it was amazing how cleverly my ideas ran, after these were once fairly set down on paper, and how suitable all the rest of the article was to the commencement, both in matter and in manner. When I began, for instance, with, “It was the remark of an ancient Greek philosopher,” the essay was sure to turn out very abstract and metaphysical, something like a paper in the *Rambler*. If my first line happened to be, “In the morning of life, when passion assumes the empire of our reason,” then the article was sure to be a solemn preaching upon the absurdity of permitting love and all that kind of thing to beset us so dreadfully in youth. Sometimes I would open with, “It was a dark night in December, and the winds rattled through the deserted corridors:” then, of course, the work turned out a story in the *Ratcliffe* style, entitled a Romance of the Danube, the Rhine, or the Po, as the case might be. Perhaps I would set out with, “It is now three-and-twenty years since a farmer in the county of Norfolk, on going forth one morning to his fields, found a child suspended in its cradle at his door, with a paper pinned to its breast,” &c.; in which case, the result was sure to be a novel in the manner of Anne of

Swansea ; that is to say, in five thin volumes, published by the Messrs Newman and Company, at five-and-twenty shillings. Occasionally, the thing would go off thus : " Every one who has been in Paris must recollect a street leading from the Pont Neuf ;" which generally answered for an article in one of the Annuals. I have sometimes dashed off as follows : " Of all the subjects which have interested mankind for a century past, there is none which has more claims upon our attention than"—such and such a thing—no matter what it was—it was always sure to be shown up, in the approved manner of my contemporaries, as the most important thing on earth. Or it might be—" There is hardly any modern writer who has done more service to the cause of truth and morality than"—so and so—no matter who—he did well enough for the time. Among other styles which I attempted, was the plump-in style, thus : " " Death and destruction !" said the major, one morning as he descended into the breakfast parlour, where the family had already assembled, and was proceeding to the morning meal." This, of course, turned out a random Shandean sketch. Other beginnings I shall here set down in the manner of a list of proverbs, without troubling the reader with a specification of what kind of thing each led to—a matter which he will himself be able to imagine as accurately as I could pretend to inform him.

There are few things in life—One day in June—There is no sentiment more difficult to be understood than—Whatever may be said by philosophers—In that part of Spain which is watered—It is an apothegm as old as the days of Solon—When the learned Scaliger was on his deathbed—Strange as it may appear—It has often been remarked—It has frequently been a matter of complaint—We do not remember of ever having been more interested than on one occasion, when—

In later times I have discovered that the difficulty of commencing an article lies in the absurd and unnecessary effort to have something very fine at the beginning, by way

of introduction. A writer of little experience always thinks it indispensable that he should preface what he has to say with a few general remarks, which, however, so far from creating a favourable impression, or doing any other good, generally serve only to deaden the curiosity and spirit of the reader, if he do not indeed choose the wiser plan of passing them over altogether. The only judicious way of beginning an article is to begin at the place where the *matter in the mind* begins, assuming a simple demonstrative style, and leaving all comment and philosophising to the conclusion, when, if the sympathy or attention of the reader shall have been properly engaged, he will be disposed to pause and linger over what has given him so much pleasure, and not only read what is added in the way of remark, but will dwell fondly even upon the printer's name and colophon, and finally only lay down the document, when not another word remains any where unperused.

THE MAN WHO SUNG WHEN ASKED.

EVERY body has had occasion to feel annoyed at the answers usually given in company to a request for a song. It seems to have been a pristine feature of human nature, that no man could sing when he was asked—for Horace indignantly remarked the fact eighteen hundred years ago. The party either never sings, or, if known to have done so at any former period, he is sure to be so ill with a cold, that he can upon no account exhibit on the present occasion. In the words of Madame Corri, he has “a leetle kittlin in de breast, and a leetle horse at de trot.” He must really be excused to-night, &c. ; and then he gets up a cough with more or less success, by way of a practical affidavit of the truth of what he alleges. So unavoidable, apparently, is this wretched affectation, that we have known a person who, being both able and willing to sing, privately

hinted to some one to ask him, and who yet, when the request was made, set forth all the usual apologies, as if he had been startled at the very idea of a vocal exhibition.

It has always been held as a particular claim upon the praise of history, that any individual should, in the prevalence of a monstrous vice, hold forth an example of the opposite virtue. Why do we so much extol Aristides?—because he was just in the midst of a people who were the reverse. Why do we reverence the name of Archbishop Leighton?—because he was moderate when all his brethren were furious. On this principle, how much must we admire any man who, instead of annoying his fellow-creatures when asked to sing, by allegations that he cannot, was positively anxious to be asked, and no sooner heard the request, than, with one preliminary hem, if so much, he was off full bound into a canticle! Such a man, reader, *has* lived—*when*, we cannot tell; but certainly—

Once in the flight of ages past,
There lived a man—

who sung when he was asked; of this we can assure you. His name was Smith, and he resided, while as yet vouchsafed for the adornment of human nature, in the city of York. It cannot be very long since Smith lived; for traditions of him are still fresh in the memory of a grateful people about that part of the country. He is said to have been a smart, neat, little man, somewhat vain about his person, and also about his singing, but redeeming every fault by that one lustrous virtue, in which he shone pre-eminent above his kind, a willingness to sing when he was asked. Alas, that such a man should have been mortal, or that, in dying, he should have left no copy!

Smith's habits were those of a convivial old bachelor; for though he had been married in early life, he had been so long a widower, that the feelings and tastes of single life had all returned upon him. Being quite at ease in his circumstances, he thought of nothing but how he might

best enjoy life—how he might, with the greatest ease, attend the greatest possible number of social meetings, drink the greatest possible quantity of punch, and sing the greatest possible number of songs. He belonged to a vast number of clubs and musical associations, not only in York, but throughout all the neighbouring country : and he would often travel fifty miles, in order to contribute to the attraction of a glee festival. Being such a sure card for a song, he was invited, moreover, to a vast number of private parties, insomuch that, one way and another, he scarcely ever missed punch and music a single night. To such festive assemblages, Smith never went till pretty near supper-time. If, when he went, he found any thing like a dance going on, he was very apt to turn at the drawing-room door, and go away perhaps to some club, where he would spend an hour in singing, and then return in time for supper. If he did go in, and endeavour to stay out the dancing, it was always evident, from his fidgetty aspect, how earnestly he longed to see all this folly over, and the people descending to the dining-room. Smith really liked supper. If he once saw a party fobbed off with sandwiches up stairs, he marked the house with a black cross in his remembrance, and would never go back again. At table he always contrived to get himself planted as near the middle as was consistent with the likelihood of his escaping the business of carving. The lady might be anxious to honour him with a seat next herself, but this he always modestly evaded. Having got himself planted in his favourite place, he would look kindly about to the rest, who were still perhaps hesitating where to alight, and say, "Pray, gentlemen, take your seats; plenty of room." To the actual business of supper, he always addressed himself with great earnestness. When he ate, like the Irishman sleeping, he "paid attention to it." Carving he detested. He thought it took up too much time, and was apt to cause his meat to cool. As to the quarter of an hour said to be allowed to carvers, "Sir," said he, "it is all a deception. Though you were

to carve all the time till the rest were done, they would still stare if they saw you eating after them. And how, sir, can any man continue to ply his knife and fork, while other twenty people, perhaps, are waiting for something else, and wondering how you can possibly eat what they have already satisfied themselves of? No, sir; the result of these disinterested services in behalf of mankind, is, simply, that you are compelled to huddle all your operations into a half or a third of the time allowed to the company at large, and, in short, that you make a bad supper. Sir, all these duties ought to be performed by servants." Not long after the conclusion of supper, and while nobody was thinking of such a thing, Smith's voice would be heard suddenly piercing the hum of conversation, his only commission for such an intrusion consisting in an unheard sentence, which he *saw* addressed to him by the lady of the house, and which, though it perhaps referred to something quite different, he was pleased to consider as a request for a song. A nod was as good as a wink to Smith in asking for a taste of his vocal powers.

Our friend was what is called a good, but not a brilliant or perfect singer. He had a stout gentlemanly voice, calculated to be of great service as a bass in a trio or duet, but not by any means a fine voice. Nevertheless, he sung with so much spirit and appropriate expression, that in general his performances were much admired, not to speak of the additional approbation which he always secured by his being so willing to contribute to the amusement of the company. Smith had just one fault, so far as singing was concerned. When once he was set a-going, there was no getting him to stop. When one of his songs was done, it would perhaps become the subject of conversation. "Capital song that—first-rate old fellow, Dibdin." "Yes, sir: but did you ever hear his Tom Bowling?—that is better still." And then, without further preface, he would commence—

"Here a sheer hulk—"

and so forth ; after which, another could be tagged as slightly on to that, and another to that again, till you could almost echo his words, and wish that "death had brought him to." Smith estimated the pleasantness of a party, and the hospitality of the landlord and landlady, and the worldly worth and amiability of the whole company, by the number of songs he was asked or permitted to sing. "A deuced nice affair we had last night at Atherton's. I sung two-and-twenty of my very best. Thought I would have got in the twenty-third ; but an old jade in a pink cap broke us up between twelve and one, just as I was about to begin." It was told of Smith, that he once stuck a song for want of the words (a most astonishing occurrence), and was so overwhelmed with shame on the occasion, as to leave the room abruptly, and rush away home. He had walked more than a mile on his way, when he suddenly recollected the missing stanza. Back he turned, crying, "I have it, I have it." On re-entering the room, he found the company just on their feet to depart. "Stop, stop," he cried, in the tone of a man arresting an execution with a reprieve ; "stop, here it is !" And, though almost breathless, he immediately resumed the song at the exact point where he had left off, with all the proper gesticulation, expression, and so forth, as if no hiatus had taken place.

Indeed, it must be allowed, great as his merit was, that singing had at length become a kind of hobby with him. He had rushed from the extreme of reluctance to the extreme of facility, and, by the praises of those who are not above flattering the foibles of an old man, had become dreadfully puffed up about his musical talents. He took it positively ill, if he were not permitted to sing at least a dozen times in an evening ; and he has been known to retire at about the ninth or tenth, muttering, "confoundedly shabby." Then his whole business during the day was to go about, calling upon the persons who had heard him sing the night before, in order to gather their applauses. "I think I was in good voice last night, eh ?"—thus delicately

he would bring on the subject. And no sooner had he got out of any one person all the praise he thought it likely that he *could* get, than off he whisked to another, whom he put through exactly the same process. It is on record that he was once standing in the street, in conversation with a group of friends, when he suddenly espied a person who had heard him sing on the preceding night, riding past in a stage-coach, which had just started for Durham. "Bless me!" he exclaimed, "there is Hanway just off—not to be back for a week. Ho, coachman, ho—hilloa—hillahoa!" And off he ran in pursuit, as if he had been an intending but belated passenger. A porter soon took up the case, and ere long the coach was arrested, though not till it had advanced about a fifth of a mile along the street. Once he saw it stop, he felt safe, and as all philosophical travellers do, took his own time to overtake it. On getting up, he opened the door, and popping in his head, "Eh, Hanway," cried he, "glad to see you before you go. Pleasant party last night. I was in excellent voice—wasn't I?" "Charming," answered his friend; "but aren't you going with us?" "How did you like the Heaving of the Lead?" said Smith, blinking the subject of a journey. "Excellent," responded Hanway. Here the coachman, finding he was not to get a customer, called to him with a somewhat uncivil execration, to shut the coach door. Hearing the whip cracking, Smith saw there was no time to be lost; so he just mentioned Black-eyed Susan, and, shutting the door, gazed wistfully at the open window, in the almost desperate hope of an answer. To his inconceivable gratification, the face of Hanway appeared there for an instant, as the coach was wheeling off; and something like "Beats Inclendon" was just caught up from the rattle of the departing wheels, by the eager vocalist, who then turned slowly back, his soul set completely at rest on the subject.

Smith no doubt had his faults—and who wants them? His failings, however, leaned to virtue's side: his eagerness

•to shine, and avidity of praise, formed the very sources of that transcendent characteristic merit—his readiness to sing when asked. Strangers, it was observed, were always delighted with Smith. They were powerfully struck at meeting a man who required no pressing to sing. He seemed to them a kind of divinity—something above nature. If his merits were less readily acknowledged by those who were frequently in his company, it was solely owing to the novelty having been in their case a little worn off, and to the long-established fact that a man is nowhere so little a prophet as in his own country. Smith now lies in York Cathedral, where he so often joined his voice to the swelling choir. But no monument records his name, or the period when he lived. He is just remembered (and what need is there of more?) as “THE MAN WHO ALWAYS SANG WHEN ASKED!”

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

